

KONSTANTIN N. MAKSIMOV

KALMYKIA

in RUSSIA'S PAST & PRESENT
NATIONAL POLICIES
& ADMINISTRATIVE
SYSTEM



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Konstantin N. Maksimov



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INTRODUCTION

The Russian Federation is one of the world's largest multiethnic states, whose internal structure includes various entities. Its political division is based on territorial, ethnic, and territorial-ethnic principles. The Russian Federation is not a result of unionization of its members by virtue of agreement or treaty. It is rather a historically formed federal state, whose federal principles were established as constitutional with consent and approval of the federation's constituent members. Therefore, Russia can be justifiably regarded as a historically established constitutional federation that has undergone several phases in its development.

The Russian state was formed on a multiethnic basis, by consolidating multiple small ethnic groups (that lived on territory now belonging to Russia), by establishing mutually profitable and historically acceptable forms of relations and interaction with the groups in question, in its gradual development on the path to federalism. This is where the main difference between the principles of contemporary Russian federalism and those of the former Soviet Federation lies. The latter was formed from sovereign states that had united either based on a "voluntary" agreement or under coercion. With rare exceptions, the political entities of the Russian Federation took shape and developed in a unified process of ethnic formation within Russia's geo-political and historical space.

Today, however, some journals occasionally publish articles whose authors have sensed the moods of particular political forces that adhere to the principles of the "localization" of power and are following the conformist trend by prophesizing a lack of prospects and even disintegration of the Russian Federation. When doing that, they refer to what is in fact a mere terminological similarity between the attributes of political constituents of the Soviet Union and members of the Russian Federation, namely the ethno-territorial principle of political division. These authors are trying to convince their readers that the fact that the division of federation is

based on the principle in question is a potential source of separatism and is ultimately bound to bring about a collapse of the federation.

The issue of federalism pertains to the academic, historical, and legal sphere, rather than to the realm of politics. It requires unbiased research, thorough examination, and comprehensive comparative analysis. It is only thereafter that conclusions and forecasts may be formulated. In our opinion, drawing comparisons between individual, and purely external, attributes characteristic of the Russian Federation's state structure, on the one hand, and the political pattern of the Soviet Union (whose federal form of government was hardly more than a mere formality) on the other is ungrounded.

Apparently, one should agree with those authors who believe that a transition from various types of political entities (implicitly historically) based on the territorial and ethnic principles within the Russian Federation to a unified territorial type is unfeasible any time soon. In contemporary conditions, both the specifics of the Russian federal structure and of Russia's socio-cultural civilization essence taken into account, a need for a closer link between the principles of federalism and nationalities issue arises. In this respect, it is vital for the Russian Federation to conduct a nationalities policy that would accommodate the issue of state integrity and unity preservation in the new nation-building conditions, ensure concurrence of the federal interests and those of all the peoples living in Russia, and address the need for their manifold cooperation and development of native languages and cultures.

Russian federalism differs from all preceding types of federalism not only insofar as the principles of the political division are concerned, but also in (more developed) forms of interrelations between the federal authorities of various levels and authorities of the peoples constituting the Russian Federation. The Tsarist administration used a variety of forms of interaction between the center and ethnic borderlands. In order for the new peoples joining the Russian state to adapt, the Tsarist administration would initially allow these people to keep their historically established government and legislation, allowing them to control their own local affairs, while components of the centralized Russian government were gradually introduced.

Under the Soviet-era decree "On Federal agencies of the Russian Republic" and the RSFSR Constitution of 1918, the ethnic and state aspects in the life of Russia's people, their social and political activities, administration and legislation were strictly unified. A new Soviet Party system of control, based on the principles of "democratic centralism," was introduced. The ethnic-state entities were operating as micro-modules within the Soviet state mechanism.

In the sweeping global changes of the late 1980s–early 1990s, when the fate of the Soviet Union and its republics was in the making, the autonomous republics of the Soviet Union claimed a more solid status for themselves as constituents of the modernized Russian Federation and upheld improvement in the federative relations with the federal authorities.

Kalmykia is a constituent of the Russian Federation that shaped and has been developing within the Russian state for several centuries. For all their specific nature, the development of relations between Russia and Kalmyks and the latter's accession to the Russian state constituted integral issues of Russia's policy in Siberia and its foreign policy in the southeast direction in general in the second half of the 16th and first half of the 17th centuries. The issue of Kalmyks was, therefore, constituent member to consideration and resolution mainly by way of peaceful diplomatic interaction at various levels of state authorities, including Russia's highest governing agencies.

Once Kalmykia was incorporated into the Russian state in the early second half of the 17th century, it was officially recognized by the Russian authorities and constituted as an ethno-political entity in the form of a feudal khanate with the status of a virtually autonomous unit. However, since the mid-1720s the Kalmyk Khanate's internal government could rather be defined as "administrative autonomy," because since the death of Ayuka Khan in 1724 the Kalmyk khans were considered governors, that is, the highest representatives of the Russian tsar.

In the 1760s, the Kalmyk Khanate was finally incorporated in the unified government system of the Russian Empire, on both central and local levels. The Kalmyks were naturalized in the Russian Empire; that is, their stable association with the state was established and legal statuses of social estates were clearly defined. This policy of the Tsarist administration cannot be regarded as "exceptional." It was a part of the general national policy of the Russian Empire in the second half of the 18th century. Starting from the 1760s, for example, Ukraine's autonomy became constituent member to a rather more decisive suppression.

The Kalmyk Khanate's status as an administrative autonomous constituent member within the unitary Russian Empire gradually transformed into the status of a conventional administrative territorial government under the Astrakhan *guberniya*ⁱ governor. Thus the Kalmyk Khanate became an internal province of the Russian state. The central state authori-

ⁱ Translator's note: *guberniya*—a major administrative subdivision of the Imperial Russia, divided into several *uezds*; replaced by the *oblast* in the Soviet Union.

ties—the Senate, Collegium for Foreign Affairs, and others—therefore started shifting their attention from the Kalmyk affairs.

Under these new conditions, and due to the fact that the Russian imperial policies became more oppressive, the Khanate's governor and his closest environment made a decision to return to their ancestors' homeland. They implemented the idea in early 1771, when a considerable number of Kalmyks migrated to Dzungaria.

The Kalmyks that remained in Russia completely lost their ethnic statehood and were incorporated into the Astrakhan *guberniya*. Kalmykia was administratively subordinated to the Astrakhan governor that controlled them through special administrative agencies of his secretariat.

In the late 18th–early 19th centuries, attempts were undertaken to restore Kalmykia's self-administration under its own governor. However a form of superintendence was to be administered, too, by a representative of the Foreign Affairs Collegium, an official that would be directly subordinated to the military governor of Astrakhan and commander-in-chief of Georgia and the "Caucasus line."

A reform carried out by the tsarist administration in the 1820s and aimed at further centralization of control affected Kalmykia. According to the *Regulations on the Administration of the Kalmyk People* (issued March 10, 1825), Kalmykia was identified as an *oblast*,ⁱⁱ equal in its status to an internal *guberniya* (a status introduced in Russia in 1822). In terms of the highest administrative control, the Kalmyk *oblast* was now under control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, locally represented by a chief police officer directly subordinated to the military governor of Astrakhan and commander-in-chief of the Caucasus. A Commission for Kalmyk Affairs was established in order to administer general control of the regional affairs. Judicial affairs were under the control of the Zargo authorized for administering the same functions as an *okrug*ⁱⁱⁱ court. In individual *uluses* meanwhile local *ulus* administrations were founded. These measures represented a significant move aimed at introducing the general Russian state administration principles in Kalmykia, and took their final shape in stipulations of the *Regulations on the Administration of the Kal-*

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *oblast*—an administrative division. In the Russian Empire *oblasts* (mainly located on the periphery of the country) were considered to be administrative units included as parts of *guberniyas* or *krais*. In the Soviet Union, *oblasts* became large administrative units that replaced *guberniyas*.

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *okrug*—an administrative subdivision of a *guberniya* equivalent to the *uezd* in the region of the Don Cossacks in the Imperial Russia; in the Soviet Union, an administrative subdivision of the *oblast*.

myk People of 24 November 1835 and the *Regulations on the Administration of the Kalmyk People* of 23 April 1847.

Under the 1835 Regulations, Kalmykia obtained the status of a self-governed region under the direct control of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and—locally—under the supervision of the ministry's representative (the Astrakhan military governor). Independent regional and local administration that was not a part of the *guberniya's* administration was introduced. Officials serving in the Kalmykia's administration were included in the number of Russia's state officials, whose status and position in the official hierarchy were determined in accordance with the Table of Ranks. The police office was transformed into a guardianship institution. From this moment on the chief guardian of the Kalmyk people, who was appointed by the tsar on a recommendation of the Internal Affairs Ministry, became the highest official in the Kalmyk administrative hierarchy after the military governor of the Astrakhan *guberniya*. The tsar would also appoint the Lama of the Kalmyk people, upon a recommendation of the Internal Affairs Ministry, and the chairman of the Zargo court, upon the recommendation of the Ministry of Justice.

The 1847 Regulations subordinated Kalmykia to the Astrakhan *guberniya's* administration and to the Ministry of State Property. Its local administration and judicial system was now integrated into the general Russian system of state authorities. The legal status of the social estates was now in compliance with the Russian legislation. These measures prepared sufficient legal grounds for incorporating Kalmykia fully into the Astrakhan *guberniya*. In our opinion, it is not correct to regard the incorporation of Kalmykia as a special *uyezd*^{iv} into the Astrakhan *guberniya* in the late 19th–early 20th century as the moment of completion of the integration of the Kalmyk people into Russia's common imperial system of state control. In fact, Kalmykia was integrated into the common system of state control considerably earlier. The incorporation into another administrative territorial unit merely deprived Kalmykia of its former status of a constituent member of the state.

After being incorporated into the system of state control and even losing its statehood after a large part of Kalmyks left for Dzungaria, Kalmykia still retained some specific forms of self-government until the early 20th century. These forms of self-government were based on and envisaged by the Kalmyk historic traditions and Russian legislative norms with

^{iv} Translator's note: *uyezd*—an administrative subdivision of Russia, originally describing groups of several *volosts* formed around the most important cities.

their provisions for ethnically and economically distinct territories. The historic experience of decentralized development allowed the Kalmyk people (as it did to some other peoples of Russia) to acquire the autonomous *oblast* status and form of control under the Soviet rule. Yet, despite the fact that the state units of specific national and ethnic groups were recognized as constituent members of the federal state in various decrees and in the Constitution of the RSFSR, in practice the RSFSR represented rather a unitary state with some elements of a federation. This is why the formation and status of the national administrative and national state autonomous units in the RSFSR were of a rather formal nature.

At the same time, we should not deny out of hand a rather efficient role of the functional mechanisms (both state- and party-based) for developing the state nationalities policy under the Soviet rule. By the early 1940s, considerable achievements had been obtained in the cultural and economic development of a number of Russia's peoples, including Kalmyks. On the other hand, the arbitrariness and tyranny of the state authorities inflicted immense moral and material damage to the entire nation, while the policy of political repression led to genocidal consequences for some peoples, including Kalmyks.

This was a reason why the issues pertaining to statehood, status of autonomous units and relations between the peoples of Russia grew acute in the years of *perestroika*, when the state system and society started becoming more democratic. Autonomous republics and other autonomous units started showing more interest in having their status raised, in building a genuine federative state in compliance with constitutional principles of federalism and international law. Some autonomous republics, perhaps, decided then to take advantage of the turbulent times and win a state sovereignty, all the more so when being provoked by some prominent politicians and state officials. However, I am convinced that the majority of autonomous republics and *oblasts* did take into account the centuries-long common history and the historic experience of the state unity, and therefore were sincere in their aspiration to improve and strengthen the Russian Federation.

This work examines the issues related to the relations and rapprochement of Kalmyks and Russia, and Kalmyks' eventual incorporation into the Russian state, against the background of Russia's domestic and foreign policy, as well as its policy towards non-Russian people within Russia in the 17th–19th centuries. The research deals further with a special status of the Kalmyk Khanate as a politically autonomous unit until a certain point, the subsequent gradual transformation of Kalmykia into a part

of Russia's common system of state control. Special attention is paid to the structure and mechanisms of administration in ethnically distinct territories of the Russian Empire and particularly to the state policy towards Kalmyks. Considerable space is devoted to Kalmykia's history under the Soviet rule (the nationalities policy of the Soviet government, nation and state building, etc.), and to Kalmykia's development in the time of development of genuine federalism. The key goals pursued in this work are to reveal specific features and typical patterns in Kalmykia's development within Russia, the Russian Empire, and the RSFSR; to examine the relations and interaction between Russia and Kalmykia; to inquire into the process of gradual expansion into Kalmykia of Russia's common system of state authorities, legislation, bureaucracy, and the social estate hierarchy. Besides, the book seeks to assess the contemporary condition and ongoing development of Kalmykia's system of administrative, judicial, and local authorities; the process of this system adaptation to the new historical, economic, and political circumstances in the region; and the process of its integration into Russia's common system of state administration.

The chronological scope of this work ranges from the time when the first official contacts between Kalmyks and Russia were established and when Kalmyks voluntarily acceded to the Russian state, up until the present moment, when the Kalmyk Republic has become an equal constituent member of the Russian Federation and enjoys its own statehood.

The examination of the issues raised in this work has shown that the majority of the Russian Federation's constituent members with their own statehood or autonomy were founded and developing within Russia as its integral parts, preserving their ethnic composition due to the state's policy and eventually reaching the status of ethno-political entities. Therefore, the Russian Federation's constituent members that are historically established based on the national and national-territorial principles have a prospect of smooth development within the federation, and—providing the correct intelligent approach to the matter—can serve as a powerful factor stabilizing the Russian Federation. It seems to me that the policy towards further development and improvement of Russian federalism and federal relations should be pursued with careful consideration of the valuable experience accumulated in the course of Russia's interaction with and control of its ethnic territories. This should be done for the sake of preservation and consolidation of the unity of the Russian multiethnic state.

CHAPTER 1

Russia's Policy Towards Kalmyks (Late 16th–mid-17th Centuries)

Russia's policy at the initial stage of the Kalmyks' accession to Russia (late 16th–mid-17th centuries)

The process of establishing a centralized Russian state, which was formed as a multinational state on a multiethnic basis, was over in the second half of the 16th century. While before the middle of the 16th century the Russian state was joined by the Karelians, Komi, Khanty, Meshchera, Mor-dovians, Udmurts, and other peoples, in the second half of the 16th century the territory of the state was expanded to incorporate the conquered Kazan, Astrakhan, and Siberian Khanates. The entire territory of Bashkiria became a part of Russia; the Chat, Baraba, and Terena Tatars naturalized in Russia voluntarily in the late 16th century, while the Tomsk Tatars joined Russia in the early 17th century.

Both the territory of Russia and its population grew (from 2.8 to 7–7.5 million km² and from 6.5 to 7 million people, respectively) due to the Russian expansion beyond the Volga river and deep into Siberia. Thus, the Russian state embraced more ethnic groups by the early 17th century.¹ Oirats (Kalmyks) as well as other peoples became a part of Russia in the late 16th century. Kalmyks (the Derbet ruler Dalai Batyr and Torgout *taisha*ⁱ Ho Urluk) left Dzungaria, formed two groups and proceeded north-west from Lake Zaysan along the Irtysh river, reached the upper course of the river, and entered into negotiations with representatives of local and central authorities to acquire Russian citizenship. Despite their numerous armed forces (over 80 thousand soldiers and 200 thousand of the rest of the population),² sufficient material resources (horses, camels, and other

ⁱ Translator's note: *taisha*—a Kalmyk chieftain.

livestock) and reputation of a warlike people, they avoided large-scale armed conflicts or battles on their way from Dzungaria to the northwest (to Tara, Tobolsk, etc.) and west (to Ural and Yaik). Moving by unexplored ways and having no idea about their future permanent location, Kalmyks pursued a cautious and rather balanced policy during the period under examination and tried to maintain neutrality. In view of the major objectives of their migration to the northwest (searching for new pasture territories) and coming into contact with other peoples, geopolitical interests of the Kalmyk *taishas* went beyond the bounds of their *uluses*.ⁱⁱ

The safe policy that Kalmyks pursued during the expeditionary war between Russia and Siberian Khanate is evidence of this. When A. Voyeikov, an assistant of the Tara *voevoda*,ⁱⁱⁱ was exploring the Baraba Steppe with a small unit (of only 400 soldiers) to locate and defeat Kuchum Khan in August 1598, there was a large group of Kalmyk soldiers amounting to five thousand people at a two-day distance from the Khan's camp. The chief of the expedition unit failed to find out why they were there. At the same time, Kalmyks' treatment of the defeated Siberian Khan's children was humane. Kuchum Khan's three sons (two sons were captured and taken to Moscow)—Aleï, Azim and Ishim—as well as their people lived in Kalmyk *uluses* for a long time. Ishim was even married to a daughter of senior Torgout *taisha* Ho Urluk. Perhaps, this fact enabled authors of *History of the USSR (Vol. 1. From the Ancient Period to the Late 18th century*. Moscow, 1947) to conclude that "Kalmyks backed up Kuchum Khan's followers..." This conclusion means politics first of all: when *History of the USSR* was written, Kalmyks were deported to Siberia. At the same time, it became known from an *otpiska*^{iv} written by Ufa *voevoda* Mikhail Fedorovich Nagov (of 1601; after March 9) that Kuchum Khan's sons were sure their father "was suckered to Kolmaki and killed." Researches studying the issue were correct to note that Kuchum Khan's sons had no real authority to regain the former power upon the defeat of the Siberian Khanate. Moreover, Kalmyks broke off all relations with "Kuchum Khan's followers" after Ishim's raid on the Tyumen *uyezd* (1606–1608).³

The cautious policy of Kalmyks can be explained by the fact that the situation in Siberia was complicated at the time. Russia was gathering strength and expanding its territory in the east; while some parties tried to

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *ulus*—a Kalmyk socio-administrative unit (a tribe, a large group of nomad families), later used to refer to a territorial unit.

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *voevoda*—an archaic Russian word for "military chief."

^{iv} Translator's note: *otpiska*—a report.

oppose this expansion and others kept an eye on it, taking the course of events into consideration and tailoring their own policies accordingly. At the same time, Russia was watchful about the Kalmyks' penetration into Siberia, since the "Russian sovereignty in Siberia was far from being stable."⁴ While expanding its territory, Russia employed a rather flexible peaceful diplomacy offering mutually beneficial terms and its patronage. Taking into consideration this important feature of the Russian national policy as well as availability of vast and free territories in the country, Kalmyks would intentionally establish links with town fortresses through engaging in active trade and other interaction with them. Intensifying such relations and encouraged by interest expressed even by central authorities, Kalmyks made their way deep into Russia trying to establish political links based on the suzerainty and vassalage basis, where both parties were to enjoy sovereign rights. At the same time, under such political circumstances the Kalmyk *taishas* did not oppose the establishment of a mutually acceptable hierarchy, that is, the supreme rule of the Russian tsar over them. However, the tsarist administration wanted to have relations with Kalmyks on the allegiance basis only. Such order not only complied with Russia's interests, both political and economic, but was also in line with the phase of state development.

Russian authorities were watchful of Oirats as a substantial military force and were confronted with the dilemma: either to allow those Kalmyks already inhabiting Russian territories to stay there, gaining their allegiance in a peaceful way, or to drive them away from the territory that had been won by Russia, thus launching a major war against numerous and bellicose Oirat tribes.

However, understanding the good economic situation of Kalmyks (as well as being aware of enormous herds of all cattle types, in particular, horses) and taking into account the character of the Kalmyk soldiers, steadfast Kalmyk policy all along their advancement and really peaceful aspirations, the tsarist administration showed interest in the Kalmyks' allegiance. Moreover, it is quite possible that when establishing close relations with Kalmyks, the Russian authorities must have kept in mind the international situation that was taking shape in the southeastern part of the country due to the formation of two Oirat states: Dzungar Khanate in Western Mongolia and Khoshout Khanate in Kukuinor (currently: Qinghai Province of the People's Republic of China). The Khanates, particularly Dzungaria, pursued an independent foreign policy and actively opposed the Qing Empire. It was via Siberia and these Khanates that Russia had a chance to establish routes to China and India.

It is a well-known fact that there are two opposite points of view in historiography regarding the migration of a part of Oirats from Dzungaria to the west, towards the Caspian Sea, and the formation of the Dzungar and Khoshout Khanates (presented, in particular, in articles by I.Ya. Zlatkin, M.L. Kichikov, etc.). According to one perception, its objective of the developments in question was to restore the Genghis Khan Empire and launch expansion against adjacent countries (N.Ya. Bichurin, A.M. Pozdneyev, N.I. Veselovski, S.A. Kozin, etc.). The other perspective maintains that the migration was caused by the fight among Oirat princes, growth of Oirats' cattle stock, as well as by a lack of pasture lands and forage resources, and by the scarcity of trade exchanges (G. Grumm-Grzhimailo, I.Ya. Zlatkin, etc.).⁵

One cannot agree with the concept of the Oirats' expansion, since there were major wars going on between eastern Mongols and Oirats in the 1670–1680s, which grew beyond the local boundaries. Any integration or joint policy of eastern and western Mongols was out of the question under such conditions. V.V. Bartold was right in maintaining that “the migration of Kalmyks or Oirats took place much later and had nothing to do with the Mongolian Empire.”⁶

It is necessary to mention in support of the second concept that all these objective processes characteristic of the feudal division period, mid-to-late 16th century, resulted in the formation of three large groups of Oirats, which determined their fate on their own. An objective factor of the Oirat ethnogeny—a gradual development period (that one can probably compare to the Renaissance)—created prerequisites for the creation of Oirat khanates in different parts of Eurasia (the Dzungar Khanate in Western Mongolia, the Khoshout Khanate in Kukunor, and the Kalmyk Khanate in the Lower Volga steppe lands) almost simultaneously.

Embarking on their route to the adjacent lands of Western Siberia and Russia, Oirats were certainly well aware of what was going on in the state, what its status was in the world arena, and what its policy was towards the peoples settled in the neighboring territories. The Russian state was closely watching the Kalmyks' migration even before they crossed its borders, and was well informed about them. Moreover, having smashed a powerful Turkish army in the environs of Astrakhan in 1569 and the Crimean Horde near Moscow in 1572, Russia was able to pay close attention to the east in the early 1570s. Therefore, it did not oppose, but rather appreciated the development of trade exchanges with all Siberian peoples including Kalmyks. It was not by accident that Ivan IV ordered in his Charter dated May 30, 1574, which allowed the Stroganov family to build

settlements near the Tobol, Irtysh, Ob, and “other rivers” in order to expand their estates up to the Urals and further and develop their trade relations with Siberian peoples including Kalmyks: “And when merchants from Bukhara and Kalmyks as well as Kazan hordes or other lands come to Yakov and Grigoriy to these fortresses with some goods, you are allowed to trade with them without any duty.”⁷

One can be sure to assume that the issue of this Charter was stipulated by the great role of the Russian foreign office—*Posolsky Prikaz*,^v which was established in 1549 to maintain diplomatic relations with foreign states, as well as the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*,^{vi} which was established in the 1560s to control the territories of the former Kazan and Astrakhan Khanates, and Siberia after 1599. Both of these offices were headed by the great Russian statesman and political figure of the mid-to-late 16th century, the experienced diplomat and *dumnyi diak*,^{vii} Andrey Yakovlevich Shchelkalov, who was actively pursuing the policy of state territory expansion both in the west and southeast.⁸ The fact that these two public offices were directly subordinated to Ivan IV and the *Boyar Duma*^{viii} testifies to their importance as well as significance of the policy they followed.

As it is known, the Russian state was going through hard times at the turn of 17th century, when both peoples (Kalmyks and Russians) started taking specific measures to get closer. Famine struck the country in 1601–1603, and armed uprisings burst out among lower classes (Khlopok near Moscow, and free Cossacks in the Lower Volga). At the same time (1602–1603), False Dmitri I from the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita*) declared himself a pretender to the Russian throne. His troops crossed the Russian border in the autumn of 1604.

Tsar Boris Godunov died in April 1605, and there was an uprising in Moscow in May. As a result, the pretender managed to march into Moscow. In a complicated situation like this, relations between Russia and the Crimea turned out to be unstable. The threat of the Tatar intervention against Russia was already imminent as early as at the beginning of 1604 when the Crimean khan broke off peace relations unilaterally.⁹

^v Translator's note: *Posolsky Prikaz*—literally “Ambassadorial office,” Russian Foreign Office.

^{vi} Translator's note: Palace *Prikaz*—an office in charge of administrative, judicial, and financial affairs of the Russian southeast.

^{vii} Translator's note: *dumnyi diak*—*Duma* secretary.

^{viii} Translator's note: *Duma*—generally, a representative legislative and/or advisory assembly in Russian history and modern Russia. *Boyar Duma* was an advisory council to the grand princes and tsars in Russia.

However, the situation did not calm down after the assassination of False Dmitri I, when Vasiliy Ivanovich Shuyskiy ascended the throne in May 1606. There were insurrections again as False Dmitri II emerged in 1607. The entire Southern Russia (from the Desna to the Volga mouth), except for a few towns, recognized the pretended Dmitri as their tsar. Uprisings came to Siberia. Some peoples of Western Siberia (Ostyaks and Siberian Tatars, who aimed “to resume their kingdoms as they used to be under Kuchum Khan”) were going to take advantage of the complicated situation that was shaping up in Moscow. At the same time, the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth and Sweden launched an open intervention.¹⁰

In spite of the extremely complicated situation in the country, the tsarist administration kept in mind the situation in the east, paid close attention to Siberia and worked diligently to secure Siberian lands for Russia. Roads and burghs (Ketskiy and Narymskiy, 1596; Verkhoturie, 1598; Turinsk, 1600; Mangazeya, 1601; Tomsk, 1604; Novaya Mangazeya (Turukhansk), 1607) were being built for this purpose on an active basis. Not only “officials and plowmen” but also “merchants,” hunters, and carpenters were sent to the newly built fortified towns of Siberia. At the same time, care was taken of indigenous peoples and the local population of Siberia. Boris Godunov instructed the Verkhoturie *voevoda* in 1598 as follows: “You shall not take carts for express messengers from the Tyumen Tatars; you shall not impose any *yasak*^{ix} on poor, old, ill or crippled Tatars or Ostyaks; you shall take care of making up benefits to natives and Russian migrants; you shall provide Voguls and Verkhoturie merchants with hay lands, fishery and hunting lands, and share all other lands among them so that Voguls and Verkhoturie people could live without any hardships.”¹¹

As Russia's situation in Siberia improved, Kalmyks started officially contacting local representatives of the tsarist authorities in the early 17th century. The very first contacts of Kalmyks were mainly related to such issues as territories for nomads' encampments or commerce in Siberian towns. The arrival of Katachey Burulduyev, representative of the Torgout *taisha* Ho Urluk, to Tara on September 20, 1606 to ask for permission to roam in the Upper Irtysh (along its tributaries—Kamyshlov and Ishim) and to carry on trade can be considered as an incident that initiated official Russian–Oirat relations. We think the major achievement of the meeting was that the representative obtained permission for the *voevoda*'s official representative to come to the *taisha* (“to send our ambassador to him”) with a reply (probably, it was positive). Officials of the Tara *voevoda*,

^{ix} Translator's note: *yasak*—a levy which was paid mostly in furs.

Cossack Tomila Alekseyev and Tatar Urdubay set off to Ho Urluk on October 2, 1606 with a mission to tell the *taisha* that “his people roam around our land without having humbly asked for our permission first” and inform him that “if he wants to be under the high authority of our tsar” then “he shall send his people of high standing to Tara for a *shert*^x and consolidation,” or otherwise “he must leave our lands and go away from our saline lakes...”¹²

In view of emerging bureaucratization of central administration as well as because the *uyezd voevodas* were not authorized to make decisions related to territorial issues or to send ambassadors to the tsar, the Tara *voevoda*, Prince Sil Ivanovich Gagarin, as we think, addressed the tsarist administration, having previously informed Tobolsk (*okrug*) *voevoda* R.F. Troekurov. In his letter of January 12, 1607 to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, he not only informed about the arrival of a representative from one of the largest groups of Torgout Kalmyks roaming in the Russian territories headed by *taisha* Ho Urluk and their requests, but also asked for instructions regarding his further actions with respect to the Kalmyks.

In reply to his letter and to the report from the Tobolsk *voevoda*, the Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin received a Charter dated March 30, 1607 from the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* (issued by the judge and *boyar*,^{xi} Prince Dmitri Ivanovich Shuyskiy under the direction of Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy). The Charter instructed the Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin to send officials to the Kalmyk *uluses* for negotiations “so that Kolmaki princes and *morzalar*”^{xii} as well as all *ulus* people would pass under our tsarist authority, take their *sherts* and oaths of allegiance and provide us with pledges of always being under our tsarist authority from now on; so that they would always pay *yasak* to us and bring the pledge to the town of Tara; and so that they would not oppress or do any harm to districts and people that are our *yasak* payers; and we order to take care of them and protect them against enemies.”¹³ If Kalmyks considered these conditions acceptable, they were to “take their *shert* according to their beliefs.”

From that time, central Russian authorities started working purposefully at making Kalmyks a part of the Russian state legally. The fact that the issue was under control of central authorities confirms that it was of great importance. The above-mentioned Charter instructed the Tara *vo-*

^x Translator's note: *shert*—an oath of allegiance.

^{xi} Translator's note: *boyar*—a member of the highest rank of the feudal Russian aristocracy, second only to the ruling princes.

^{xii} Translator's note: *morzalar*—a Kalmyk nobleman.

evoda to inform the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* and personally *boyar* Dmitri Ivanovich Shuyskiy about the course of negotiations with Kalmyks (S.I. Gagarin was earlier ordered to hold them).

Having informed the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* about his suggestions regarding the current relations with Kalmyks, *voevoda* and Prince Sil Ivanovich Gagarin, a skilled state figure experienced in rendering Siberian peoples constituent members of Russia as well as in eastern politics in general, decided not to wait for official instructions from the center (which, as it has already been mentioned above, came only on March 30, 1607) and sent his envoys to Dalai Batyr, the *taisha* of Derbets, and Ho Urluk, the *taisha* of Torgouts, with the proposal to pass under Russian authority and send their "high-ranking people" to Tara for taking the *shert* as early as January 27, 1607. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* approved of the *voevoda*'s actions later.

While the lot of Cossack Tomila Alekseyev and Tatar Urdubay sent to Torgouts on October 2, 1606 turned out to be tragic (they went missing), the mission of the Tara *voevoda*'s representatives of the *yasak* payers "Yenobai the prince and Kugotai with their company" to Dalai Batyr was successful. They returned to Tara together with a delegation from *taishas* Dalai Batyr and Izeney on June 16, 1607. "Kolmaki *taisha* Kugonai Tubiyeu" was at the head of the Kolmaki delegation comprising 21 people. According to him, he represented "five key rulers of Oirats" ("*taishas* Baatyr Yanyshev, and Ichiney Urtuyev, and Uzhen Konayev, and Yurikty Konayev"), who had 45 *taishas* (minor chieftains) under their command. There were 12 *sans* (a *san* means ten thousand people; according to the traditions of the period, it is quite possible that they meant male population only) in possession of all the said *taishas*. Thus, one can speculate that the population under control of the aforementioned rulers made up over 200 thousand people. That is why one can perfectly agree with the opinion of S.K. Bogoyavlenski and U.E. Erdniyev that about 80 thousand Kalmyk soldiers and 200 thousand of the rest of the population came up to the Russian border by the late 16th century.¹⁴

Taisha Kugonai Tubiyeu, the head of the official Kolmaki delegation, took a verbal *shert* (oath of allegiance) to Russia represented by an outstanding state official—the Tara *voevoda* and prince S.I. Gagarin—on behalf of a major part of Kalmyks (Derbets), with the exception of Ho Urluk's and Kursugan's groups that were leading a nomad's life in the Upper Irtysh independently, for the first time in June 1607.

The Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin submitted a report on the meeting with the Kalmyk delegation and taking the *shert* of allegiance to Russia, which took place in June 1607, to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on September 30,

1607. The report said as follows: “When interrogated, Kugonai-*taisha* said that he, Kugonai, was sent by Kolmaki people—*taishas* Baatyr and Ichiney with their people—to ask humbly for your, great Tsar’s, mercy, so that you ordered not to conquer them but let them be under your royal command and roam all over our lands in the Upper Irtysh towards the saline lakes; and so that we imposed *yasak* on them, Kolmaki people, in horses, camels or cows if we please; that is what they are humbly asking ... Kugonai-*taisha* *sherted*^{xiii} to you, the great Tsar, on behalf of all of his people and on behalf of 49 *taishas*, *uluses* and Kolmaki people, with the exception of Urluk-*taisha* and Kursugan-*taisha*.”

The Kalmyk delegation left back for their *uluses*. It was accompanied by five officials authorized by the Tara *voevoda*, whose objective was to meet Kalmyk *taishas*, explain the essence of the expected agreement with the tsarist government to them, emphasizing mutual benefits of the Kalmyks’ becoming a part of the Russian state. The key objective was as follows: “to deliver our charter to them [Kalmyks—*K.M.*] saying that we, the great sovereign, have generously agreed upon their *chelobitnaya*^{xiv} and ordered them to roam upstream of the Irtysh and other places where they want, and ordered to keep them under my high control, and ordered to protect them against all enemies including Cossack horde, Nogai and any other enemies, and demanded from them to be always loyal to my charter, and I am going to send my reward to them soon; and ordered them to pay *yasak* in horses and camels or anything else so that they did not suffer privations.”^{xv} These contractual relations were to be formed in Moscow at the top level—between the Russian tsar and chief *taishas* Dalai Batyr and Izeney—and the Charter was to be “sealed with golden seals.” The officials were instructed to provide the *taishas* with all conveniences and guarantee their security during their voyage to Moscow.

The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* reminded the Tara *voevoda* that he was to keep an eye on the Torgout *taishas* Ho Urluk and Kursugan and send his representatives to them to negotiate their accession to Russia. At the same time, he was advised to pursue a safe and consistent policy toward the two chieftains. “If Ho Urluk and Kursugan do not want to be under our high control, do not provide us with pledges and refuse to pay *yasak*, you must protect our *volosts*^{xv} being *yasak* payers from them and must not wage war

^{xiii} Translator’s note: *sherted*—took an oath of allegiance.

^{xiv} Translator’s note: *chelobitnaya*—petition.

^{xv} Translator’s note: *volost*—an administrative division of Muscovy and, later, in Russia, a part of *uyezd*.

on them until the great Kolmaki *taisha* Izeney and his company become loyal to us.” This implies that the central authorities did not recommend the *voevoda* to resort to the use of force so that not to “put off or alert” great Kolmaki *taishas* until official contractual relations were established with the Derbet *taishas*, Dalai Batyr and Izeney.

The charter issued by the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on October 18, 1607 is one of the most important historic sources enabling to study the Russian national policy in the early 17th century. Making nomadic Siberian peoples parts of Russia on a voluntary and mutually beneficial basis was a part of the policy. With that purpose in view, the state authorities were to pursue a flexible and peaceful policy aimed at making peaceful agreements, developing mutually beneficial trade, ensuring security of merchants, and guaranteeing free communication. The following instruction of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* to the Tara *voevoda* confirms this: “You must welcome them and take care of them, you must ask them to come to the marketplace for trade and protect them there. You must also select one or two good interpreters skillful in the Kolmaki language as well as in reading and writing in Kolmaki among our officials, Tatars, or captives.” Another particular feature of the policy was that Russia offering its territory, patronage, and protection demanded paying *yasak* in horses, camels, or other kinds of cattle in the amount that would not be an excessive burden on the people.

After the first successful agreement reached by the Kugonai Tubiyev’s delegation, another Derbet delegation, including a representative of Torgouts, arrived in Tara soon (on September 21, 1607). The delegation’s composition was more impressive this time: four ambassadors (Bauchin, Devlet Takhabaksheyev, Arley Alakov, and Kesenchak Chiganov) from five chief *taishas* (Derbet *taishas* Baatyr, Ichiney, Urukhtu, and Unginay, and Torgout *taisha* Shukhay [Sunke]—Ho Urluk’s son). A merchant caravan came to Tara along with the delegation (about 90 merchants alone), which had 550 horses with them for sale, to buy necessary goods. According to the agreement, Tara authorities exempted Kolmaki merchants from any duty. This was not just a financial question, it was a policy pursued to attract Kalmyks: “We must not exasperate them at first or put off from our tsar’s worship.”

According to the directive of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, the entire Kolmaki delegation (Alakov, Bauchin, Takhabaksheyev, and Chiganov) accompanied by the Tara *voevoda*’s official Boldan Boikach left for Moscow to meet the Russian tsar. The Tara *voevoda* S.I. Gagarin informed the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on January 12, 1608 that Kalmyks were expanding

the territory where they were roaming (“they came there together with their *uluses* and started roaming along the Om’ river”) and the *taishas* were still asking “the great tsar and grand prince Vasiliy Ivanovich, the autocrat of the entire Russia..., to take them under the tsar’s control and protect them against Altyn Khan.”

After the Kalmyk delegation came to Moscow on February 7, 1608, a high-ranking official—Vasiliy Grigoryevich Telepnev, deputy judge who was probably in charge of eastern issues—received it at the *Posolsky Prikaz*. Tsar Vasiliy Ivanovich Shuyskiy received the entire Kalmyk delegation accompanied by V.G. Telepnev, a *diak* from the *Posolsky Prikaz*, on February 14, 1608. When ambassadors were presented to the tsar and subjected to the ceremony of his hand kissing, they set out *chelobitnayas* (petitions) from Kolmaki *taishas* through an interpreter. V.G. Telepnev, a clerk from the *Posolsky Prikaz*, read the reply of Tsar V.I. Shuyskiy to their *chelobitnaya*. *Taishas* and all their *uluses* were allowed to “roam in the land of Siberia along the Irtysh and Om’ rivers as well as near Kamyshlov and other places where they want, and ordered to stay always under the high tsar’s control, and they will always be protected against all enemies including the Cossack hordes, Nogai and Altyn Khan, and they must always and in every respect be loyal to the tsar in view of the tsar’s permission. And they must serve us, the great tsar, honestly and for ever and ever.” Kalmyks were supposed to pay *yasak* “in horses according to their own will and depending on how many horses they can give.” At the end of the reception, the tsar requested: “you, chieftains, are welcome to meet us, the great tsar, personally.”¹⁶

However, no document about their contractual relations was adopted as a result of the first official reception of the Kalmyk delegation by Tsar V.I. Shuyskiy. Indirect sources say that there was only one appointment in the tsar’s palace on February 14, 1608, which initiated the process of official incorporation of Kalmyks into Russia.

When Kalmyk ambassadors left Moscow and went to Tara, the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* instructed the Tara *voevoda* I.V. Mosalskiy (Charter dated February 27, 1608) to bring the delegation to “the Kolmaki land,” explain the terms and conditions of the Kalmyk incorporation into Russia and organize the oath of allegiance (*shert*) for senior *taishas* in Tara and “in rivers Om’ and Kamyshlov” for junior ones. The Kalmyk delegation accompanied by officials of the Tara *voevoda* with Cossack Anika Chernyi left Tara for “Kolmakia” on August 23, 1608.

Envoys of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* came back “from the Kolmaki land” on December 5, 1608 and drew up an in-depth report saying, “they

visited all the Kolmaki *taishas* in their *uluses* and informed them about our charter.” The main point of the report was that Kalmyks agreed to the terms and “they are delighted with our charter and want to be under our control.” Yet since “there was a campaign against Altyn Khan, they do not have time for the *shert* in autumn; there was a snowfall and it is impossible to come to Tara for trade.” Kalmyks were supposed to take *shert* near the saline lakes or at the Om’ river as early as the next spring only but they “do not want to come to Tara” and “refuse to make a pledge or pay any *yasak*.” This confirms the fact that there were no contractual relations with Kalmyks in writing until the end of 1609 and that Kalmyks started to complain about the terms of the allegiance agreement.

That is why the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* recognized contractual relations between Russia and Kalmyks officially and sent a Charter to the Tara *voevoda* Ivan Volodimerovich Mosalskiy on behalf of V.I. Shuyskiy saying that he (Mosalskiy) was required to send officials to the Kalmyk *taishas* Izeney and Dalai Batyr to confirm the *shert* taken by their delegation in Moscow and allow Kalmyks to trade free of duty in Siberian towns on August 20, 1609.

When the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* learnt about the Kalmyk campaign against Kazakhs, they guaranteed security to all Kalmyk *uluses* roaming in the vicinity of Tara in the same Charter in response to a request from Kalmyks of December 10, 1608 (*taishas* Izeney and Dalai Batyr sent their messengers Igitei and Katoi)—this time in accordance with the agreement: “You can rely on our tsar’s mercy.” The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* sent another Charter to I.V. Mosalskiy on the same day (on August 20, 1609). It instructed him to send officials to the Kalmyk *taisha* Ho Urluk to administer the *shert*. Ho Urluk was supposed to give *shert* based on the terms and conditions reached in Moscow on February 14, 1608. Kalmyk *taishas* had an option of concluding an allegiance agreement directly with the Russian tsar in Moscow. The Charter read as follows: “If *taishas*, the high-ranking people, want to come to us, the great tsar, in Moscow, on their own, they can do it feeling absolutely safe... and I will confer my great mercy on them.”

It is possible to explain certain activation of the tsarist administration regarding administering *shert* to Kalmyk *taishas* in 1608–1609 not only by the Kalmyks’ corresponding activities, in particular, in 1608, but also by the Russian urge towards making Kalmyks a part of the Russian state in view of the complicated situation in the country, its southern border, and never-ending claims on the part of Poland. Moreover, it is probable that the tsarist administration was aware of changes in the politics con-

ducted by the senior Kalmyk *taishas*, who were trying to win a victory over Khalkhas Altyn Khan and Kazakhs in a combined effort in 1609.

Pospela Golubin, an envoy of the Tara *voevoda*, who was visiting Kalmyk *uluses* in March–July 1609 and was present at the *chulgan* (congress) with the participation of *taishas* Ho Urluk, Koshevchei, and Abai, the widow of the *taisha* Izeney, informed the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* about what was happening in the “Kolmaki land” as well as opinions and intentions of Kalmyk *taishas* (A. Chernyi reported about this before as well), in his report dated July 20, 1609. He said that the senior *taishas* could not come to Tara and junior *taishas* could not come to the Om’ and Kamyshlov rivers to confirm their previous *sherts* and suggested sending the Tara *voevoda*’s ambassadors to conduct negotiations. Speaking about the levy, “they neither sent any ambassadors to us nor paid any *yasak* to anyone... and they do not want to pay any *yasak* to anyone anymore.” In addition, P. Golubin understood a very important detail in Kalmyks’ opinions. He cited the *taishas* in his report: “We are not settled people, we are nomads: we roam where we want.”

The tsarist administration began altering its policy toward Kalmyks to a certain degree based on the information about the situation in Kalmyk *uluses* beginning from the middle of 1610. Along with peaceful diplomacy to make Kalmyks a part of the Russian state on a voluntary basis, Russia was ready to exert pressure then. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* in its Charter dated June 15, 1610 instructed the Tara *voevoda* I.V. Mosalskiy to send officials “to high-ranking *taishas* Koshevchei and Baatyr and their company to Black Kalmyks (Dzungarians) and instruct them to comply with our previous *ukases* so that *taishas* and all *ulus* people were under our control, served us, were loyal to us, paid *yasak* and roamed in our lands along the Irtysh and Kamyshlov.” If Kalmyk *taishas* rejected the aforesaid offers, the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* instructed I.V. Mosalskiy on behalf of Tsar V.I. Shuyskiy to resort to threats during negotiations: “Otherwise they will be banned to roam in our Siberian land along the Irtysh and Kamyshlov rivers as well as towards saline lakes or own any fishery or hunting lands, and they will have to abandon our Siberian lands. And if they start roaming in our lands in spite of our prohibition, we will muster troops from all Siberian towns and wage a war against them. And we will order the troops to conquer them and their *uluses* and capture their wives and children.”¹⁷

At the same time, heads of the *Prikaz* recommended that the Tara *voevoda* should display vigilance and should not resort to armed force but, on the contrary, should try to resume previous peaceful negotiations on making Kalmyks a part of Russia. The document features a touch of ori-

ental policy—caution and peaceful regulation of foreign political issues as far as possible.

It was the last charter issued by the administration of Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy. As a matter of fact, he was deposed and arrested together with his brothers Dmitri and Ivan a month after it was sent to Tara. A group of seven of the most influential *Boyar Duma* members (F.I. Mstislavskiy, A.V. Trubetskoy, Z.P. Lyapunov, V.V. Golitsyn, M. Vorotynskiy, etc.) was administering the affairs of the state temporarily (from July 17 to the end of 1610). Contemporaries called the government *Semiboyarshchina*.^{xvi} The interregnum period from July 17, 1610 to February 7, 1613 turned out to be extremely hard and complicated for Russia. It seems that Kalmyk affairs were postponed under conditions of the ongoing fight of Russia against Polish–Lithuanian (claiming the Russian throne) and Swedish interventions, taking into account the race for power among different groups of *boyars* (as a consequence of imposture) and in view of practically ruined state administration. At the same time, Kalmyks felt certain safety after the victory over Khalkhas Altyn Khan and Kazakhs, and did not rush to establish political relations as they had done before. It was the end of the peaceful and relatively quiet initial period of rapprochement between Kalmyks and the Russian state and the Kalmyks' official allegiance to Russia.

As Russia was making its way deep into Siberia in the 16–17th centuries, it was trying to annex and incorporate Siberian peoples mainly by way of kindly treatment and based on contractual relations formed at various levels of the state administration, up to the highest level—the tsar. At the same time, Russia paid much attention to developing commerce and exchange as well as ensuring mutually beneficial obligations. Following a flexible policy in the east, the tsarist administration, first of all, aimed at reaching specific objectives: it was interested in ensuring security for the vast territory of Siberia, developing trade relations and economy and acquiring economic benefits (in the form of levy paid by subjects, but without imposing any excessive burden on them). It is well known that while pursuing its foreign policy in the east, the tsar administration laid a considerable emphasis on the policy of securing Russia's further advancement into Eastern Siberia and the Far East, as well as establishing new safe trade routes to southeastern countries.

The development of relations with Kalmyks and their incorporation into the Russian state were an important constituent of the Russian policy in Si-

^{xvi} Translator's note: *semiboyarshchina*—government composed of seven *boyars*.

beria, in particular, its foreign policy in the southeastern direction. That is why Kalmyk issues were examined and handled by the tsar himself and superior bodies of the Russian state authorities—*Boyar Duma*, *Posolskiy Prikaz*, and Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, as well as such territorial and administrative authorities as Tobolsk (*okrug*) *voevodstvo*^{xvii} and Tara (*uyezd*) *voevodstvo*, which at the same time represented national institutions with a broad range of functions and powers (civic, military, fiscal, etc.), up to diplomatic functions (sending and receiving ambassadors, negotiating and making agreements on behalf of the central authorities).

Diak Aleksei Shapilov edited, corrected, and signed all the charters of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* mentioned above. Therefore, quite a senior state figure, a deputy judge (head of the *Prikaz*), was in charge of the Kalmyk issue. He pursued a purposeful national and uniform foreign policy on behalf of the central authorities in their relations with eastern and southern countries.

When annexing and incorporating Siberian peoples, taking them under its patronage, protecting them, and delegating the power over them to the local aristocracy (*taishas*), the Russian state acted well in line with its own territorial, economic, and political interests. It was expanding its territory and building up its natural, labor, and military resources. Such a policy was in compliance with Russian domestic and foreign interests.

Peoples taking Russian allegiance thereby won a strong patron and protector that put an end to sanguinary wars of annihilation between these peoples and their neighbors, which had had grave consequences for many of them. Moreover, they became a part of a common economic and geopolitical space thus breaking fresh ground in the common history of the Russian peoples.

Russia's policy towards Kalmyks in 1620–1650

The initial stage of relations between Kalmyks and Russia lasted for almost ten years, but it was practically suspended due to the internal situation that shaped both inside the Russian state and in the Kalmyk *uluses*. A new rapprochement of the parties began when the Time of Troubles was over in Russia.

^{xvii} Translator's note: *voevodstvo*—a military authority under control of a *voevoda*.

The interregnum period was over in February 1613: the *Zemsky Sobor*^{xviii} enthroned Mikhail Fedorovich Romanov. When the aftermath of the false royalty was eliminated (in the middle of 1614), the Russian statehood was resumed, and an independent consistent policy was formed. The Time of Troubles was over when the Truce of Deulino was made with Poland in December 1618. The results of the Truce were unfavorable for Russia: the European territory of the country was greatly reduced (Poland retained the Russian cities of Smolensk and Chernigov, the Novgorod-Severskiy lands with 29 towns, and Zaporozhye, while Swedes reserved the mouth of the Neva and the entire coast of the Baltic Sea, thus shutting up the access to the Baltic Sea for Russia). However, a refusal of the Polish king's son Władysław to claim the throne of Russian tsars was the key political breakthrough of the Truce.¹⁸

Being engaged in western matters, Russia kept in mind the need to develop and maintain relations with Turkey, Persia, and the Crimea prejudicing them against Poland, as well as to settle the relations with the Nogai, whose raids on Russian territories had escalated during the Time of Troubles.

While Russian affairs in the west were far from being successful, Russia moved towards the ocean in the east, to the Chinese borders, and expanded its territory by 70 thousand square miles "bringing scattered savage populations under the control of the tsar, collecting *yasak* from them and often exasperating them by plundering."¹⁹ The "plundering" was not merely a result of the complicated economic situation in the country; it occurred because the central authorities eased up their supervision over local Siberian authorities. The tsar's letter to the Stroganov family is a confirmation of Russia's complicated financial and economic situation. Mikhail Fedorovich applied to the Stroganov family to borrow some money and bread for the state in May 1613: "There is no money, and the stock of bread in garners is scarce. We have no money to pay wages to our officials." Under the conditions, collection of *yasak* from the Siberian peoples was one of the key sources of income to the treasury.

However, officials from the Siberian *voevodstvos* in charge of *yasak* collection were apparently "overdoing" it making additional profits for themselves. The tsar administration reminded *voevodas* more than once in this connection that they "must treat indigene subjects well... when collecting *yasak*, and *yasak* collectors must not offend people in vain or levy

^{xviii} Translator's note: *Zemsky Sobor*—the first Russian parliament of the feudal estates type, in the 16th and 17th centuries. The term roughly means "assembly of the land."

extra taxes. They must collect *yasak* imposed by the tsar in amiable and kind ways, without being cruel or ungracious. In order to collect *yasak* imposed by the tsar in a profitable way, the *yasak* amount must be based on their resources, and it is permitted to levy *yasak* only once a year; it is prohibited to levy it two or three times a year.”

The civil war between Oirats (Abai–Koshevchey’s group) roaming along the banks of the Irtysh, Om’, and Ishim rivers came to an end during the interregnum period in Russia (1610–1613). It was a period of lull and internal peace, which made it possible for them to conquer some peoples (Baraba and Kuznetsk Tatars) and impose a levy on them. This slowed down their movement to the west and taking Russian allegiance. As it has already been mentioned above, at that time the tsarist administration increased the *yasak* burden on the peoples that were not parts of Russia by then. “If people living in the new lands are not obedient, you must try to convince them in an amiable way first; if you fail to persuade them by any other means, you must restrain them by means of war and small-scale devastation so that to calm them down a little.”²⁰ The central authorities backed up the policy pursued by the administrations of Siberian towns. Though in a somewhat subdued form, this concerned Kalmyks as well. As a result, there were conflicts and even armed clashes between Russians and Oirats. According to N.Ya. Bichurin, it was not the entire people but individual small princelings that got involved in the clashes.²¹

These kind of clashes between Russians and Kalmyks became very frequent in 1612–1613. It is possible that the instruction of the central authorities saying “you must restrain them by means of war and small-scale devastation so that to calm them down a little” served as a basis for Tara *voevoda* Ivan Mikhailovich Godunov to organize punitive expeditions to some Kalmyk *uluses*. The tsar administration was backing up and encouraging these actions taken by the Tara *voevoda* for a while.²² The Tara *voevoda* sent big expeditions comprised of Yurt and *volost* Tatars as well to some roaming groups of Kalmyks in 1613 twice (in July and September). As a result, he did manage to “calm down” Kalmyks. Ambassadors (Av-gachka, Dalan, and Chedutay) of Kalmyk *taishas* Turgen and Dalai Batyr came to Tara on November 25, 1613 and suggested taking a *shert* according to their faith in order to put an end to mutual attacks. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* received information that the Kalmyk ambassadors came to Tara in February 1614 and instructed I.M. Godunov (on April 4, 1614) to enter into negotiations immediately and send officials “to the Kolmaki land with Kalmyk people to Turgen and Dalai Batyr to make an agreement.” The fact that the Tara *voevoda* was to inform the Kazan Palace

Prikaz (dumnyi diak Aleksei Shapilov and *diaks* Petr Mikulin and Ofonasiy Ovdokimov) about the course of the negotiations confirms that the tsarist administration attached considerable importance to resuming peaceful relations with Kalmyks.

The next delegation from Kalmyk *taishas* Batyr, Turgen, and Ho Urluk arrived at Tara on May 3, 1615 and was dismissed back “to the Kolmaki land” on May 16 accompanied by interpreter Oleshka Masalitin. Yet it is not quite clear what happened on the way. When Oleshka Masalitin started feeling fear for his life, he escaped and informed ataman Yeremey Prutinkin, whose detachment was set up near the saline lakes, that he had apparently seen “great people coming up the steppe along the Kamyshlov to the Ishim.” However, scouts of the Tyumen *voevoda*, M.M. Godunov, revealed that “there were five Kalmyks with two horses near the Ishim.”

In the same year of 1615, Vlasko Kolashnikov, a Cossack from Tara who was sent to Kalmyk *taishas* Turgen, Butak, and Maldyshe, coped with the task given to him by the second Tara *voevoda*, Petr Mutokhin, “and made Kalmyk *taishas* take the *shert* so that they went under our tsar’s control, and the *taishas* wanted to send their high-ranking officials as ambassadors to us.” However, when the winter came, Vlasko Kolashnikov had to stay with *taisha* Maldyshe and lived there until the spring. When the spring came, “Kalmyks let him go away, and Kalmyk *taishas* Tabutai and Maldyshe sent their ambassadors, Kunai and Batyr, along with him to Tara.”

Instructed by the Tara *voevoda* K. Velyaminov, in June 1616 Vlasko Kolashnikov reported in person to the Tobolsk (*okrug*) *voevoda* and *boyar*, Prince Ivan Semenovich Kurakin about the positive results of his mission to Kalmyk *taishas*. The Tobolsk *voevoda* took a decision to expand and secure the arrangements made with Kalmyks. Therefore, between March 31–April 6 of 1616 he “sent officials from Tobolsk [apparently, the *okrug*’s officials were of a higher rank than before—*K.M.*], Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn, with some companions to the Kolmaki land to *taishas* Batyr, Kuzeney, Chigir, and Urluk, as well as other *taishas*, and instructed them to tell *taishas* to be under our tsar’s control and to send their ambassadors to us, and to allow merchants to come to our Siberian towns with their goods, and not to roam in our lands along the Om’ and Kamyshlov rivers without our permission.”

The Tobolsk *voevoda* immediately informed the Tyumen *voevoda*, Fedor Semenovich Korkodinov, that “officials from Tobolsk and Tara were sent to the Kolmaki land on a diplomatic mission,” and that “you must not send military men from Tyumen to wage wars against Kalmyks.” On Sep-

tember 20, 1616 Ivan Semenovich Kurakin reported to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* about all of his actions including the official report to the Tyumen *voevoda*. The *Prikaz*, in its turn, responded immediately to this report by approving of the Tobolsk *voevoda*'s actions and disapproving of the Tyumen *voevoda*'s actions because the *Prikaz* paid much attention to the development of peaceful relations with Kalmyks ("Prince Fedor, you are not right in acting this way"). The *Prikaz* issued a strict reprimand with regard to the Tyumen *voevoda* Fedor Korkodinov because he kept suppressing Kalmyks and sending "military men from Tyumen to wage a war against Kalmyks and to carry out a war by robbery" (i.e., in an illegal way). In this connection, the Charter issued by the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* on October 15, 1616 instructed the Tyumen *voevoda* "not to send any military men from Tyumen or Tatars to levy war against Kalmyks any more, and not to suppress them... And if you resort to robbery again and keep sending military men from Tyumen or Tatars to levy war against Kalmyks without an order from Tobolsk, you *will be disgraced and punished*" (emphasis by the author).

Having received the report from the Tobolsk *voevoda* of September 20, 1616 regarding the dispatch of ambassadors to the Kalmyk *taishas* in March–April 1616, the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* sent a corresponding report to the *Posolsky Prikaz* (which was an executive authority of the tsar and *Boyar Duma* at that time). A Charter issued on October 2, 1616 by the *Posolsky Prikaz* (which was in effect controlled by the tsar himself) instructed the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin to report in detail on the results of the mission carried out by Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn as soon as the envoys from Tobolsk and the Kalmyk ambassadors came back (or failed to come back). If the negotiations were successful, the *voevoda* was to take measures to ensure security of this Kalmyk delegation and send them accompanied by Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn to the tsar, with prior notification of the center about the terms of agreement and number of attendants.

Ivan Kurakin informed the *Posolsky Prikaz* about the return of the Tobolsk envoys and Kalmyk ambassadors from *taishas* Batyr and Isentur in October–November of 1616 with gifts for the tsar (two horses). The Tobolsk *voevoda*'s official report to the *Posolsky Prikaz* said that "The Kolmaki *taishas* asked for your, tsar's, permission to roam in your lands in the vicinity of Siberian towns, and they want to be under your control." The Kalmyk ambassadors were offered upon their arrival to inform their *taishas* that it was required to think over the terms of negotiations, make a draft agreement and dispatch "their high-ranking officials to you, the tsar,

to Moscow” as ambassadors. The Kalmyk ambassadors informed the Tobolsk *voevoda* that the *taishas* took a decision to send their ambassadors to the tsar. However, they felt concerned over two issues: the destiny of ambassadors Chetan, Baibagish, and Kerenti, who had been dispatched by the *taishas* to Tyumen as early as the summer of 1616, the results of their mission remaining unknown; and the problem of ambassadors’ security on their way to Moscow since “former *voevodas* of Tobolsk and Tyumen would oppress and rob their people [Kalmyks–K.M].”

The concerns of the Kolmaki *taishas* regarding the destiny of their deputation to Tyumen turned out to be grounded to a degree. Tyumen official Gavrilka Ivanov and “his companions” reported that Tyumen *voevoda* Prince Fedor Semenovich “Korkodinov robbed the Kolmaki and captured their horses and sheep.” “And Prince Fedor, my tsar, kept them in Tyumen for a long time for a reason I do not know, and did not give them any money from your tsar’s treasury that was appropriate to them, and the Kalmyks were allegedly reported to eat dead horses found along the way.” An inquiry made by an official from the *okug voevodstvo*, Vasilii Tyrnov, as well as memoranda of the Kalmyk ambassadors, who left Tyumen on October 12, 1616 together with Vasilii Tyrnov, confirmed all the facts. The Tobolsk *voevoda* concluded on that ground that “Prince Fedor robbed, suppressed, and tormented Kalmyks and I, my tsar, think that he did much harm and interfered with your tsar’s affairs.” The conclusion as well as the inquiry and memoranda were sent to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* addressed to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich.

At the same time, the Tyumen *voevoda*, Fedor Korkodinov was not merely robbing the Kalmyk ambassadors. He also held a Kalmyk *abyz*,^{xix} Baksha captive in 1616 and received a ransom for him: 30 horses and 100 sheep. The Kazan Palace *Prikaz* demanded on November 16, 1616 “to send Baksha to Tobolsk under guard” and inform the *boyar*, Prince Oleksei Yuriyevich Sitskiy (obviously, the head of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*), about the date of his delivery beforehand. Due to the reasons mentioned above, the Kalmyk delegation failed to set off for Moscow in 1616. That is why in November–December 1616 the Tobolsk *voevoda* sent his officials “Litvin Tomilka Petrov and mounted Cossack Ivashka Kunitsyn... who had been to the Kolmaki land before” in June–July of the same year to the *Posolsky Prikaz* to report about the situation with Kalmyks to the tsar.²³

In their in-depth memorandum, which was obviously written in the second half of December 1616, they described the objective (on the in-

^{xix} Translator’s note: *abyz*—mullah.

structions of Ivan Kurakin) of their visit to “the Kolmaki land” ruled by the Derbet *taisha* Dalai: to bring the Kolmaki *taishas* under the tsar’s control “so that they were under the tsar’s control and came to the tsar’s land in Siberia as well as other Siberian towns to sell their goods.” They received a warm welcome in the Kolmaki land and the *taishas* took their offer to take Russian allegiance kindly.

At that time the Kolmaki land they wrote about was quite a large group of Oirats headed by the *taisha* Dalai and comprising four of his brothers as well as his cousins, nephews, Torgout *taisha* Ho Urluk, and Choros *taisha* Chokhur. “The Cossack Greater Horde and Kirghiz Horde” (Great Zhuz Kazakhs and Yenisei Kirghiz) “were under their control and obeyed to them” (to the Oirats of the group).²⁴ However, this group of Oirats depended on the Khalkhas Altyn Khan, who was “an ally of the Chinese tsar” and had to pay “*yasak* to them in the form of 200 camels, 100 horses, and 1,000 sheep per year from all *taishas* including high-ranking ones, except for small *taishas*.”²⁵

The results of the resumption and development of mutual relations with Kalmyks after Mikhail Fedorovich’s accession to the throne, actual steps taken by executive authorities and *voevodas* of Siberian towns in this direction, as well as information disclosed in the inquiries of Tomilka Petrov and Ivashka Kunitsyn, were examined in detail on December 31, 1616 at a session of the *Boyar Duma* (Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, *boyars* and Princes Fedor Ivanovich Mstislavskiy, Ivan Nikitich Romanov, Dmitri Timofeyevich Trubetskoy, Dmitriy Mikhailovich Pozharskiy, Ivan Mikhailovich Vorotynskiy, Vasilii Petrovich Morozov, Ivan Vasiliiyevich Golitsyn, Fedor Ivanovich Sheremetev, Ivan Borissovich Cherkasskiy, Mikhail Mikhailovich Saltykov, Grigoriy Volkonskiy, Ivan Semenovich Kurakin, etc.). The *Boyar Duma* took a decision “to consult... Kolmaki people from now... and take them under the tsar’s control. And if Kalmyks start sending ambassadors [a higher diplomatic rank—*K.M.*] or envoys [a lower diplomatic rank—*K.M.*] to the tsar, you must let them proceed from Tobolsk to Moscow to see the tsar without any delay.” The tsar issued a similar ukase complying with the *Boyar Duma*’s decision to be sent to Siberian towns.

The *Boyar Duma* examined the Kolmaki issue as a part of the foreign policy in the southeastern direction. That is why issues related to the Khalkhas Altyn Khan, China, and the tsar Bukhara were settled along with the Kalmyk issue. As for the case of the Tyumen *voevoda*, Fedor Korkodinov, the *Boyar Duma* acknowledged that “*voevodas* in Tyumen offend Kalmyk ambassadors, commit violence, and rob them.” This ver-

dict referred to the ukase on the subject already being in the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*. Nevertheless, the contents of the ukase remained unknown. However, Fedor Korkodinov was never mentioned in any other documents after this session of the *Boyar Duma*.

By way of executing the verdict issued by the *Boyar Duma* on December 31, 1616 and the corresponding tsar's *ukase*, on May 29, 1617 the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin sent an ataman, Ivan Saveliev, and official Pervushka Petrov, along with the ambassador Buga, who arrived from *taisha* Dalai, "to the great *taisha* Bagatyr and all Kalmyk people so that they were under the tsar's control and sent their merchants with all their goods at their disposal to the tsar's towns."

The envoys of the Tobolsk *voevoda* arrived at the camp of the Derbet *taisha* Dalai Batyr, who was at the head of the Northwestern Oirats, in the first half of August in 1617, and stayed with him for two months. At the reception held by Dalai Batyr and in the presence of two lamas, two of Dalai Batyr's sons, wives, Kazakh envoys from the Great Zhuz, and envoys of the Yenisei Kyrgyz, ataman Ivan Saveliev disclosed the goal of his mission "by the tsar's order": "to instruct him to be under the tsar's control with all of his Kolmaki land, and not to send his people to levy war against the tsar's towns, and to detain prince Ishim, who has disobeyed the tsar recently and levied war upon the tsar's *volosts*, and to send him along with his ambassadors to the tsar." When accepting the offer made by the Russian envoys, Dalai Batyr replied that "he is ready to be under the tsar's control, and to send his ambassadors to the tsar's to ask him humbly about his mercy, and to oppose those who disobey the tsar whenever His Majesty instructs him so."

The delegation headed by Ivan Saveliev came back to Tobolsk on November 23, 1617 accompanied by Kalmyk ambassadors Buga and Koodan from the *taisha* Dalai Batyr, who were sent to Moscow a month later, that is, on December 25. The Kalmyk delegation consisting of two ambassadors mentioned above and accompanied by Tobolsk officials Ivan Saveliev and Pervushka Petrov arrived in Moscow on February 12, 1618. According to an instruction from Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich, *diak* Sava Romanchukov received the Kalmyk ambassadors in the *Posolsky Prikaz* on March 20, 1618.

The Kalmyk ambassadors described the purpose of their arrival to the *diak* at the meeting in the *Posolsky Prikaz*. They said that their people had already spent as long as 13 years in the territory of Siberia and they had maintained good trade relations with Siberian towns for all these years. That time they came from *taisha* Bagatyr to the tsar with an oral instruc-

tion to say “that the tsar is to accept only *taisha* Bagatyr with his people under the tsar’s control, while the whole Kolmaki land would like to be under the tsar’s control and to obey the tsar as well as oppose the tsar’s enemies whenever instructed to do so.” They also added that they would tell the tsar about that in person.²⁶

When ambassadors from Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr were received at the *Posolsky Prikaz*, *diak* Sava Romanchukov executed a note as well as a reference about the arrival of the Kalmyk ambassadors to Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy in 1608 for the *Boyar Duma* and the tsar. All documents prepared by the *Posolsky Prikaz* were presented to the *Boyar Duma*, which examined them, prepared its offers, and sent them to the tsar for a final decision. Since the Kalmyk delegation spent a lot of money during the long way (September 1617–February 1618), by the tsar’s order they received the same clothes and similar gifts and in the same amount and range as the delegation of 1608 (with the exception of silver scoops).

Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich received the Kalmyk ambassadors Buga and Koodan at his palace on March 29, 1618. As a result of the audience, the Kalmyk ambassadors obtained the first official statutory document from the Russian state—Charter issued by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich to the Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr about his Russian allegiance made in the Russian and Tatar languages and dated April 14, 1618.²⁷ The enactment conveyed the politics of mutual relations between Russia and Kalmyks in general terms (“to be in love and friendship... and take care of each other on all things”) as well as key conditions for Kalmyks to be a part of the united state. In addition to taking the Kalmyks of *taisha* Dalai Batyr under its patronage, Russia took them under its allegiance, provided payment and care for them, guaranteeing protection from all enemies, as well as freedom of movement, travel, and trade in Siberian lands. According to the Charter, Kalmyks were not only to be “under my tsar’s high control” but also “to serve and be loyal to us, the great tsar, and your military men must take part in all military actions against our enemies whenever My Majesty instructs you so.”

The contents of the Charter of April 14, 1618 confirm that the policy of Russia toward Kalmyks changed to a certain degree. While before 1618 the tsarist administration demanded from Kalmyk ambassadors hostages and paying a certain tribute, in addition to loyal service, as mandatory requirements for Kalmyks to be a part of Russia, later a key prerequisite is military service: “Your military men must take part in all military actions against our enemies.” Obviously, the persistency of Kalmyks “neither to pay *yasak* nor give hostages” as well as outspoken and straight opinions of

some Kalmyk *taishas* that they roam in the territories seized by Russia contributed to such a change in the policy. Moreover, making Dalai Batyr's *uluses* a part of Russia would considerably strengthen positions of the latter in Siberia.

When Russia started taking allegiance of separate and large groups of Kalmyks officially and on mutual consent, it kept on combining peaceful diplomacy and power politics ("to restrain them a bit"). The *Posolsky Prikaz* complimented the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin for organizing "bashing of Kolmaki people" in 1618 as well as for negotiating with them (an official, Yan Kucha was sent to *taisha* Khara Khula) and instructed to develop relations and pursue the policy of getting Kalmyks to give a *shert* in the Charter of January 30, 1619. It emphasized: "You should negotiate with Kalmyk ambassadors about all our issues, bring them under our tsar's control and encourage them to do so by promising to provide a payment for them from the tsar." At the same time, the *Posolsky Prikaz* ordered the *voevoda* "to provide the present ambassadors with food in the amount necessary for their trip and as before and let them go from Tobolsk." Executing the order given by the *Posolsky Prikaz*, the Tobolsk *voevoda* dispatched the ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula to Moscow with the proposal "to be under our tsar's control" in the second half of 1619.²⁸

The tsar administration left hardly any avenue unexplored to exert pressure on Kalmyks in 1618–1619. Due to clashes with Altyn Khan and Kazakhs, the movement of Kalmyk *uluses* was very intensive during the period. They were getting closer and closer to Tobolsk, Tyumen, and Tara. Based on a relation (deliberate or erroneous) from the Baraba Tatars' Sargul-murza (who, as a matter of fact, depended on Kalmyks) that Kalmyks were allegedly going to attack Tobolsk and Tara *volosts* when it froze for the first time, Tara *voevoda* K.S. Velyaminov-Vorontsov organized an attack of a large armed group along with Yurt Tatars and Tatars being *yasak* payers on Kalmyks from the *ulus* of the *taisha* Sengil in October 1618, when it froze in Siberia for the first time that year. As a result, "many Kolmaki people of the *taisha* Sengil were killed; their *uluses* were destroyed and a lot of people were captured"; 50 camels were taken as well. The *Posolsky Prikaz* approved of the actions taken by the Tara *voevoda* and he was instructed "to send the camels to Moscow." At the same time, the Tobolsk *voevoda* Ivan Kurakin organized an attack against the Kalmyk *uluses* of the *taisha* Khara Khula (the unit was under the command of a solicitor Oleksei Velyaminov-Vorontsov)²⁹ even though he seemed to advocate the peaceful process of making Kalmyks a

part of Russia. After the armed attack, Khara Khula started seeking a peaceful agreement with Russians actively.

Khalkhas Altyn Khan, whose relations with Kalmyks were tense, in particular, during several previous years, decided to take advantage of the Russian–Kalmyk clashes immediately. He sent his ambassadors to Moscow in May 1619 with a proposal to organize a joint attack on Kalmyks, which were allegedly preventing the development of trade and diplomatic relations. A reply was given to Altyn Khan almost a year later. Mikhail Fedorovich promised in his Charter of April 24, 1620 “to protect you and your land from Kolmaki *taisha* Khara Khula,” but almost at the same time (on May 7, 1620) he instructed Toms *voevoda* I.F. Shakhovskiy to study in detail the Khalkha and Chinese states in compliance with the *Boyar Duma* order of December 31, 1616 and report accordingly to the *Posolsky Prikaz* as soon as possible. The Charter instructed not to take any independent steps towards relations with the states on any ground and to refuse to provide “any assistance of our military men” to Altyn Khan until then.

The fact that Russia somewhat changed its policy toward Altyn Khan can be possibly explained by Kalmyks showing no aggression on their part. Moreover, the *Posolsky Prikaz* learnt in November of 1619 that ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula, the key enemy of Altyn Khan, were on their way from Tobolsk to Moscow. The Kalmyk delegation arrived in Moscow simultaneously with Altyn Khan's ambassadors (on January 10, 1620). The tsar received both delegations in the presence of Ivan Tarasovich Gramotin, *dumnyi diak* of the *Posolsky Prikaz*, as early as on January 29.

The Kalmyk ambassadors headed by Anuchai informed Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich about the instruction from *taisha* Khara Khula given to them: “He ordered us to ask humbly so that he, *taisha* Khara Khula, his brothers, children, nephews and all their *uluses* could be under Your Majesty's control, and gave an oath of allegiance to your statesmen so that to be directly subordinate to you and always be under your high control for ever and ever.” The *shert* given by Khara Khula's ambassadors to the Tobolsk *voevoda* in 1619 is meant here.³⁰ When the Kalmyk ambassadors delivered their message and presented their gifts, *dumnyi diak* Ivan Gramotin read the tsar's reply: “We, the great tsar, will order my officials to give a reply to you on another occasion.” Mikhail Fedorovich received the Kalmyk ambassadors again on May 23, 1620 and they finally left Moscow with a Charter and accompanied by Cossack ataman I. Belogolov a month later, on June 23.³¹

A face-to-face audience of the Kalmyk ambassadors with the tsar and oral assurance of *taisha* Khara Khula laid a basis for issuing a Charter by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich's to the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula taking him under Russian control on May 25, 1620. The Charter stipulated basic principles and terms of mutual relations between Russia and Kalmyks from Khara Khula's *uluses* as a part of the Russian state. Making Kalmyks a part of the country ("you, *taisha* Khara Khula, and your people are granted with our great tsar's mercy"), Russia guaranteed payment from the tsar as well as care and protection against enemies. According to the Charter, the *taisha* Khara Khula and all people from his *ulus* "are to be under my tsar's control and serve us, the great tsar, and you will be granted my tsar's payment for all of your services depending on your loyalty to us, the great tsar."

In view of lasting military actions and intensified attacks on the part of Altyn Khan, Kazakh and Kyrgyz, Kalmyk *taishas* Baibagish, Chokhur (Khara Khula's sons), Ho Urluk, and Dalai Batyr got together for a council, perhaps, in the first half of 1620. "And they agreed to send messengers to you, the great tsar and great prince of the entire Russia, Mikhail Fedorovich, to ask you humbly to allow them to be under your tsar's control."³² According to the decision taken by the four Kalmyk rulers in 1620, contacts between Kalmyk ambassadors and Siberian towns for taking *shert*, making contractual relations, taking Russian allegiance, and developing and improving trade connections revived very much. There was a specific feature characteristic of relations established between Russia and Kalmyks in 1620: the tsarist administration charged *voevodas* of Siberian towns with the authority to solve problems of taking Russian allegiance by Kalmyks while supervising over the process closely. *Voevodas* were to strictly follow instructions given by the center on a case-by-case basis.

A delegation comprising 27 people from the Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr, who took Russian allegiance in 1618, came to Tobolsk in June of 1620 "so that you, the tsar, gave him a favor and ordered to come to your Siberian towns for trade." It is obvious that the establishment of reliable trade relations was the key goal of merchants. The same year ambassadors from *taisha* Dalai Batyr arrived at Tobolsk to inform the local authorities that *uluses* were roaming "close to your tsar's Siberian towns because Altyn Khan and the Cossack Horde are levying war against them, the Kalmyk *taishas*." *Voevodas* from Siberian towns knew from other sources as well that Kalmyks were going to the Ishim and Tobol.

A representative delegation from the Kalmyk *taishas* Ho Urluk, Chokhur, Mandasher, Mangytai, and Baibagish arrived at Tobolsk on Septem-

ber 12, 1620. The delegation's arrival was probably related to the decision taken by the congress of the four rulers of Kalmyk *uluses*. Kalmyk envoys from the *taishas* brought to Moscow five horses of different colors as a gift for tsar Mikhail. The Tobolsk authorities showed due respect to the delegation, promised to report to the tsar, and let them go back to their *uluses*. Since it was required to clear up the situation on site, that is, in *uluses*, the Tobolsk *voevoda* Matvey Mikhailovich Godunov resolved to send officials headed by a *boyar's* son, Dmitriy Cherkasov to Dalai Batyr and other *taishas*.

An in-depth official report about the arrival of ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taishas* from *boyar* Matvey Mikhailovich Godunov, who entered upon the office in September 1620, to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, was examined at a session of the *Boyar Duma* on January 20, 1621.

At the same time, the Kalmyk *taishas* sent their ambassadors to other Siberian towns as well on similar missions. Four ambassadors from Kalmyk *taishas* Ho Urluk, Chokhur, and Prince Ishim (Kuchum Khan's son) arrived at Ufa on October 6, 1620. On October 9, 1620, the ambassadors took an oath before Ufa *voevoda* O.Ya. Pronchishchev to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich "to be under your tsar's control... to come to the city of Ufa for trade" and "not to levy war against the Ufa *volosts*."

On October 19, 1620, ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Baibagish (Baybagas), his brother Tygurchei, and his son Arkel, as well as from *taishas* Tolai (Dalai), Chokhur, Urluk (Ho Urluk) came to Ufa to *shert* on the *taishas'* behalf to the tsar. On 23 October, O.Ya. Pronchishchev administered the oath to the *taishas'* ambassadors "to be under your tsar's control." Moreover, the *voevoda* at his own discretion "granted them a favor, ordered to trade with Russian people... and ordered to buy horses from them and exchange them for some stuff." However, he did not let the Kalmyk ambassadors go to Moscow without an instruction from the central authorities upon the pretext "that winter is coming."

As a result of the meeting with ambassadors of the Kalmyk *taishas* and Prince Ishim and negotiations with them in October of 1620 and after administering a *shert* of allegiance to them, Ufa *voevoda* O.Ya. Pronchishchev compiled two official reports to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* (October–November 1620). Both the tsar and the *Boyar Duma* examined them. They fully approved of the actions taken by O.Ya. Pronchishchev. Having heard written reports from the Ufa *voevoda*, "the tsar ordered and boyars said" that the *voevoda* "did well by taking Kolmaki under the tsar's control, and he must order them to come to the city for trade from now on, and he must take care of them and protect them so that nobody could of-

fend them, and he must ensure fair trade with them so that they got accustomed to it and not scare them away." It is clear that the document issued by the supreme state authority stipulated the key directions of the Russian policy toward Kalmyks: to make Kalmyks a part of the Russian state by means of active negotiations, by employing peaceful diplomacy and trade relations and by providing direct protection to them. To strengthen the progressing contractual relations, the Ufa *voevoda* was instructed "to let Kolmaki ambassadors go to Moscow... whenever they come" in the future.

Due to the escalation of the ongoing war between Altyn Khan, who was allied with the Kazakhs and Nogai, and the Kalmyk *taisha* Khara Khula, who was backed up by other *taishas*, in 1621 contacts between Kalmyks and Russians were abruptly cut down. Ambassadors from the Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit (Dalai Batyr's brother) arrived at Tomsk in 1621 with the proposal "to be always under the high tsar's control and serve to the tsar, and to be loyal to him in every respect." Tomsk *voevoda* I.F. Shakhovskiy sent his envoys Martyn Borzhevitskiy, Cossack Ivashka Shirokiy, and interpreter Druzhinka Yermolin together with the Kalmyk ambassadors on March 17, 1621 "so that *taisha* Mangit gave a *shert* to the tsar and always was under the tsar's control, and always served to the tsar and was loyal to him in every respect without any vacillation."³³ According to M.L. Kichikov, Kalmyk ambassadors came to Moscow in February of the same year to assure that "Kalmyk *taishas* will be loyal to the Russian tsar for ever and ever while they are allowed to roam along the Tobol River."³⁴ However, it is not clear: which *taishas* had sent these ambassadors? Where were they received? Who received them? What were the results of their meeting? Tomsk *voevoda* I.F. Shakhovskiy informed Tobolsk *voevoda* Matvey Godunov the same year that "Black Kalmyks (Dzungarians), in particular Talai-*taisha*, and Babagan-*taisha*, and Mergen-*taisha*, and Shukur-*taisha*, and Saul-*taisha*, and many other *taishas* were roaming between the Irtysh and Ob as well as near the saline lake together with their *uluses* because the Black Kalmyks of *taishas* Khara Khula and Mergen-Tyumen, subordinates of Altyn Khan, oppressed them."³⁵

Taking advantage of a relative lull that occurred in the armed conflict between Khalkhas and Kalmyks, the Tobolsk *voevoda* sent an authoritative delegation headed by the *boyar*'s son Dmitriy Cherkasov (that belonged to a stratum of middle and minor feudal lords) to *taisha* Dalai Batyr to clear up the situation in Kalmyk *uluses* in 1622. The "information warfare" intensified substantially during the period, and it was not favor-

able for Kalmyks. On the one hand, it was the *voevodas* of some Siberian towns that were interested in misinforming central authorities about alleged attacks to be undertaken by Kalmyks against Siberian towns and *volosts*, since these *voevodas* sought “armed soldiers” and “tsar’s payment (in the form of money and bread stock).” On the other hand, spreading of this kind of misinformation also aligned well with the interests of Kalmyks’ enemies that wanted to set Russians against Kalmyks.

In early April of 1623, Dmitriy Cherkasov visited some *uluses* where people of minor *taishas* were roaming. Later he came to Kalmyk *taisha* Sengil, who had heard about the Tobolsk *voevoda*’s proposal that Kalmyks “be under our tsar’s control” and replied in the affirmative. *Taisha* Sengil said: “I do not want to fight against the tsar’s people. I want to be under His Majesty’s high control. I understand that our senior *taishas* have been in contact with your boyars and *voevodas*, and I want to be under the tsar’s control like the *taishas*.” Sengil gave “a *shert* to the tsar and great prince of the entire Russia, Mikhail Fedorovich” and sent his ambassadors to Tyumen along with Cherkasov to confirm and verify his obligations.

The Ufa *voevoda* Grigoriy Vasiliyevich Izmailov sent ambassadors headed by a *boyar*’s son, Vasiliy Volkov, “to Kolmaki *uluses* to *taishas* Talai, Urluk, Baibagish, and Chokhur with his Charter” in April 1623. As early as in late May, Vasiliy Volkov met the Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit (*taisha* Dalai Batyr’s brother), who *sherted* to the Tomsk *voevoda* in 1621. *Taisha* Mangit informed Vasiliy Volkov “that his brother Dalai and his companions levied war against Mugan Altyn Khan and... it will take about two months to get to him, Dalai.” Mangit turned his attention to a certain feature in the delegation membership confirming the importance and authority of the Russian ambassadors. He said, “*Boyars*’ children from Siberian towns or from Ufa have never been ambassadors from His Majesty to *taishas* before; they would always send Cossacks from Siberian towns or officials from Mongolian Tatars to meet us, *taishas*.”

Since many *taishas* were absent (they were taking part in a campaign against Altyn Khan), Mangit decided to take *shert* to the Tobolsk *voevoda* Matvey Godunov based on the note delivered by the ambassadors. Mangit took *shert* in June of 1623 to the ambassadors “on his own and on behalf of his brothers, the Kolmaki *taishas* Talai, Urluk, Ilter, Shuklei, Kuilbosar, Tangir, Tepel, Sharakub, Kubonai, Manshir, Moidar, Vchemergen, Volbui, Ildan, and Kunderbei, as well as on behalf of all Derbet *taishas* from 30 *uluses* that they, the *taishas*, will be under the high tsar’s control.” Mangit “sent two of his people as ambassadors to ask humbly to the

tsar and one ambassador to the Ufa *voevoda* as well” along with the ambassadors from Ufa.

Boyar's son Vasiliy Volkov returned to Ufa on August 1, 1623 and compiled an in-depth report on the next day concerning his voyage to Kalmyk *uluses* and administering a *shert* to Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit. Kalmyk ambassadors Yelgutai Menzibayev and Karakai Kaiderev accompanied by Vasiliy Volkov (he had the report on him) set off for Moscow on August 7, 1623. The ambassadors reached the city only in early October, since they had been delayed in Vladimir until the tsar's instructions were received. On October 8, Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich examined an official report written by Ufa *voevoda* Semen Gavrilovich Korobyin on August 2, 1623 and the official report prepared by *boyar's* son Vasiliy Volkov from Ufa on September 15–18, 1623 for the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* concerning his stay with Kalmyk *taisha* Mangit (the reports comprised full information about *taisha* Dalai Batyr's loyalty), and ordered the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* to receive and hear Kalmyk ambassadors.

According to a note on the official report from the Ufa *voevoda* appended at the tsar's instruction, major amendments were made to the Russian policy toward Kalmyks. It was suggested that the administrations of Siberian towns establish and develop their relations with Kalmyks including trade, and assist Kalmyks in taking Russian allegiance in all aspects. However, all problems related to the mutual relations with Kalmyks had to be solved directly, in the Siberian towns, where the “authorities were to hold negotiations with them [Kalmyks] and bring them to the oath of allegiance,” yet they were “not to allow Kalmyk ambassadors to go to Moscow; as was permitted under the tsar's previous decree” or “to sell any weapons to them.”³⁶ One of the reasons behind the changes in the tsar administration's policy was that “they [Kalmyks—*K.M.*] were mostly military people, and they were not allowed to go to Moscow.” This was explained by the need to ensure security for Moscow in the conditions of aggravated relations with Poland, Lithuania, Turkey (after the assassination of Sultan Osman), the Crimean Khanate, and the Nogai movement. Moreover, the tsarist administration did not see or experience any economic or military assistance from Kalmyks. Therefore, it was not by accident that the note said, “and there is no benefit from them.” This new policy of the tsarist administration toward Kalmyks was naturally defined by the heads of the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* (*boyar* and Prince Ivan Mikhailovich Vorotynski) and *Posolsky Prikaz* (*dumnyi diak* Yefim Telepnev, who was appointed to this position on December 21, 1620 after a recommendation from the most holy Patriarch Philaret—the tsar's father³⁷). At

the same time, the *Posolsky Prikaz* suggested storing all reports on relations with Kalmyks at the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*.

The years of 1624–1625 were relatively quiet as far as the relations between Kalmyks and Russians were concerned. Mutually beneficial trade between Kalmyks and Siberian towns intensified during that time, and exchanges of envoys became more frequent. The main objective of Kalmyk ambassadors was to solve trade problems, while ambassadors from Siberian towns saw their goal in studying the situation and internal conditions in Kalmyk *uluses* (mutual relations between Kalmyks and other peoples, as well as among groups of Kalmyks), and in monitoring the attitudes of Kalmyk *taishas* and *uluses*. Judging from official documents (mainly diplomatic ones), during the period from June 1624 to November 1625, five embassies from different Kalmyk *taishas* visited Siberian towns, and four embassies came to Kalmyk *uluses* from Siberian towns (Tobolsk and Tyumen) for 4 to 5 months in 1625. Nevertheless, Tobolsk *voevoda* Yuriy Yansheyevich Suleshev instructed Siberian towns “not to send any Russian envoys to the Kolmaki land” in 1624. At the same time, due to the intensification of trade relations and active movement of Kalmyk *uluses*, the *voevoda* sent an official message to Siberian towns instructing them “not to send any envoys to Kalmyks so as to prevent any war with Kalmyks.”³⁸

The tsarist administration had to watch closely the violent internal fights which escalated among the Kalmyks in 1625. In late 1624 (or in early 1625) Chin-*taisha*, the eldest brother of Chopur and Baibagish, (all of them sons of Khara Khula), died, and a strife for his heritage burst out between the two brothers. Choros *taisha* Khara-Khula (their father) and Derbet *taisha* Dalai, who were interested in establishing peace and accord among Kalmyk *taishas* in order to ensure external security (especially protection against Altyn Khan), interfered in the strife in order to reconcile the two brothers. Later on they were joined by Torgout *taisha* Ho Uruk. However, Chokhur, who claimed Chin-*taisha*'s entire heritage Chin-*taisha* for himself, was backed up by other *taishas* (Dzungar *taisha* Tabitai, Torgout *taisha* Mergen-Tyumen, as well as Baty-Kuyan—a Khoshout *taisha*, to all appearances).³⁹ Violent clashes between the two opposing groups lasted until the autumn of 1629. In their resistance, both parties tried to incite Russians against each other.

In 1629, the Ufa administration learnt about an attack allegedly organized by *taisha* Chokhur against the Karataban *volost* in the Ufa *uyezd*. However, *taisha* Chokhur denied the allegations and laid the blame for the attack on *taisha* Dalai, his rival. To establish the true initiators of the attack, Ufa *voevoda* I.G. Zhelyabuzhskiy sent his military men headed by

boyar's son Artem Gladyshev to *taisha* Dalai on August 15, 1629. Dalai's headquarters received the envoys from Ufa at a due level. *Taisha* Dalai "with his children gave *shert* to be under the tsar's control for good as a true serf."⁴⁰ To confirm his *shert*, Dalai sent "his envoys Baltu and Bochei to the tsar" along with Artem Gladyshev, who left his headquarters for Ufa on October 15, 1629.

Kalmyk *taishas* Dalai and Gushi let the Ufa envoys as well as their ambassadors go in October of 1629 and levied a "war against Chokhur and Mergen-Tyumen because they disobey the tsar, levy war against the tsar's towns, oppress Bashkirs and capture them and they are his enemies."⁴¹ Thus, it is clear that Dalai did not only show that he was loyal to Russians and kept his *shert* given by his son Dorgi in 1624 but also smashed Chokhur's group under the pretext of "serving" the tsar and persecuting those who "disobeyed" him. After the defeat, Chokhur and his allies had to submit to Torgout *taisha* Daichin (Ho Urluk's elder son), who was roaming along the Yaik river.

It is probable that a new group headed by Daichin was formed at the time, and simultaneously the relations between *taisha* Dalai, on the one hand, and the Torgout group of Ho Urluk that was moving towards the Volga mouth with his sons and Torgout princes, on the other hand, finally broke off.⁴² In this connection, it is possible to speculate that the internal war of 1625–1629 accelerated the re-aggregation of Kalmyk *uluses*, as well as enhanced the process of selection of the routes by all groups to the destinations of their prospective permanent development.

According to some sources, *taisha* Ho Urluk did not reach any decision regarding a place of permanent roaming in 1625 yet but he examined closely previous places: "on both banks of the Irtysh and along the Kamyshlov and Om' rivers." Nazar Zhedovskiy, leader of a Tara mounted unit, met *taisha* Ho Urluk at the Sargatka river, in the upper reach of the Irtysh, in September 1625 and suggested that the *taisha* should ask for the tsar's permission to roam in the tsar's land wherever the tsar allows. Nazar Zhedovskiy threatened the *taisha* in case he failed to do so, "the tsar would order to send a numerous army to fight him from the town of Tara."⁴³ Ho Urluk listened to Nazar Zhedovskiy and said that he did not want to be under the tsar's control until it was clear "where the tsar would allow them to roam." As soon as "he sees Your Majesty's mercy to him, he will give a *shert* to you, the great tsar, to be under your high control." It is clear from the document that determining a permanent place for roaming was the key problem for the Kalmyks from this group. With this basic purpose in view, Ho Urluk's ambassadors Chutundei, Kunderi, Konai, and

Chuniy came to Tara on September 25, 1625. However, the Tara administration refused to let Ho Urluk roam in the aforesaid territory and suggested that the *taisha* should take the oath and start roaming “in the tsar’s lands in the steppe near the Karatun stow so that his people never approached Irtysh or the town of Tara or Karatun.” Nevertheless, Ho Urluk replied only in late November 1625. He postponed solving the problem until the next spring in view of the forthcoming winter. In this connection, it is necessary to agree with I.Ya. Zlatkin, who noted that “at the same time [he meant 1625, or rather “since that time”—*K.M.*] Ho Urluk and his sons, as well as most of the Torgout princes started moving faster towards Astrakhan where they brought *uluses* of some non-Torgout rulers that joined them as well.”⁴⁴

The Derbet *taisha* Dalai Batyr and his children kept roaming in the vicinity of Ufa, Tyumen, and Tobolsk during the period. As envoys Balta and Bauchin said in Moscow in April of 1630, “their *taishas* roam in Dembinsk heights and large river floodplain in the Black sands near Yurgench, and *taisha* Talai and his children roam there.” Ambassadors from Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr Balta and Bauchin arrived in Moscow almost six months later, in the spring of 1630. As Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich instructed, *dumnyi diak* Yefim Telepnev and *diak* Maksim Matyushkin received them at the *Posolsky Prikaz* on April 16, 1630. The envoys stated the purpose of their arrival—“*taisha* Talai asks humbly for your tsar’s mercy so that you ordered to take him under your tsar’s control as a vassal and ordered to roam near the town of Ufa”—and informed that “*Merzi-taisha* [Dorgi-*taisha*, one of Dalai’s sons—*K.M.*] gave a *shert* in Ufa to the tsar on behalf of his father and brothers and on behalf of all Kolmaki people to be always under the tsar’s control as direct vassals for ever and ever, to obey, serve, and be loyal to the tsar.”⁴⁵

Yefim Telepnev and Maksim Matyushkin approved of the oath taken by *taisha* Dorgi and showed keen interest in the internal situation of Kalmyks and their weapons, in particular, among *taisha* Dalai’s group, as well as in events taking place there and in clashes with other *uluses* and peoples. They probably reported all the information obtained from the Kalmyk ambassadors to the tsar. An extract made in May of the same year at the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* confirms this. It referred to the objective of the Kalmyk ambassadors and tsar’s decision that he “will show mercy to the Kalmyk *taisha* Talai as well as his children and will order to send his tsar’s greeting to them.”

When outcomes of the first meeting with Kalmyk ambassadors Balta and Bauchin at the *Posolsky Prikaz* were reported to the tsar, *dumnyi diak*

Yefim Telepnev and *diak* Maksim Matyushkin received the ambassadors again on June 24, 1630. High-ranking officials from the *Posolsky Prikaz* informed the envoys during the meeting: "The great tsar greeted *taishas* and ordered you to be under his tsar's control as direct vassals and ordered to send his tsar's greeting to *taishas* to Ufa" Regarding the territory for roaming, Derbets were allowed to roam in the Ural region and along the Emba river, and the answer read as follows, "they must roam in the territories and near Siberian towns where they used to roam before, and they must live in peace with Nogai and Bashkirs." The Kalmyk ambassadors had to agree: "when the tsar orders them to roam in the old territories behind Irtysh, there is enough space there and we will roam there."

Probably, when all the details were agreed at the *Posolsky Prikaz* and reported to the tsar, he received the envoys Balta and Bauchin in late June—early July of 1630: "they were there, in front of me, My Majesty, I met them and greeted them." It is most likely that Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich gave a short audience to the Kalmyk ambassadors since it was the second official deputation from the Kalmyk *taisha* Dalai Batyr (the first one was in March 1618). The tsar did not issue any Charter to the envoys from Dalai Batyr in April–May of 1630 since the Derbet *taisha* received it in April of 1618. Moreover, *taisha* Dorgi, Dalai's son, "took a *shert*" not only on his own but also on his father's behalf "to be always under the tsar's high control as a direct vassal for ever and ever and to be under the tsar's command and obey him" in Ufa in 1624. However, it is necessary to note that when the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* prepared the report in May 1630, it could not refer to and confirm results of the previous deputation from *taisha* Dalai Batyr since "all Kalmyk papers burnt down in a fire."

The Kalmyk envoys Balta and Bauchin accompanied by a *boyar*'s son from Ufa, Aleksei Lopatin left Moscow for Ufa in early July 1630. The *Posolsky Prikaz* in its Charter of July 12, 1630, sent to the Ufa *voevoda* I.G. Zhelyabuzhskiy, informed him in detail about the results of the meeting with representatives from the *taisha* Dalai Batyr and instructed him to invite Kalmyk *taishas* to come to Ufa personally and inform them of the suggested terms for making Kalmyks a part of the Russian state. First of all, he was instructed to show resolution and consistency regarding the territorial issue: "They were ordered to roam in the same places of Siberia where they used to roam; they must not roam near the Irtysh because our *volosts* are close to the river" At the same time, the *voevoda* had to take into account "where it is better for them [Kalmyks—*K.M.*] to roam so that not to scare them away out of the tsar's mercy and not to acerbate them;

and so that they did not oppress our people, Bashkirs and other *volosts* along with the Nogai; and he must take care of all issues.”

When informing I.G. Zhelyabuzhskiy about the fact that Kalmyk ambassadors took a *shert* on behalf of the *taisha* “to be always under the tsar’s high control as direct vassals for ever and ever” the *Posolsky Prikaz* suggested that the Kalmyk *taishas* should to Ufa personally “to take a *shert* in front of you again and to deliver hostages to the town of Ufa.”

The Charter issued by the *Posolsky Prikaz* also provided for an option in case the Kalmyk *taishas* refused to come to Ufa. In this case it was required to find out the reasons of their failure to arrive and to learn Kalmyks’s intentions with a special emphasis laid on “Kalmyk military men, their fighting practices and how they fight.” Local authorities from Ufa were to report immediately all information “about any diplomatic problems to the *Posolsky Prikaz* and about military issues to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz*” (*boyar* and Prince Dmitriy Mametryukovich Cherkasskiy).

The Ufa *voevoda* received the Charter from the *Posolsky Prikaz* on August 29, of the same year, i.e., when Kalmyk ambassadors Balta and Bauchin arrived at Ufa. In compliance with the *Posolsky Prikaz* instruction of September 10, 1630, I.G. Zhelyabuzhskiy kept ambassador Balta with him and sent Ufa *boyar*’s son Anton Urakov along with Bauchin, a Kalmyk envoy, to *taisha* Dalai. However, because both Kalmyk *taishas* and representatives from *taisha* Dalai failed to arrive at Ufa, the *Posolsky Prikaz* permitted I.G. Zhelyabuzhskiy to let the ambassador Balta go to Kalmyk *uluses* only on February 22, 1632 (thus, his diplomatic mission lasted for almost three years) to inform the *taishas* that their tsar’s payment was reserved and they could come to Ufa to get it.⁴⁶

The *Posolsky Prikaz* kept monitoring the issue and reminding the Ufa *voevoda* that it was necessary to secure the Moscow agreements of 1630 in Ufa, and at the same time informed Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich and the most holy Patriarch Philaret about the progress of the Kalmyk issues. They were directly supervising over the foreign policy department.

At the same time, there were no instructions for the Ufa *voevoda* regarding the ambassador Kultaiko from the Kalmyk *taisha* Kuisha (Turu-Baihu, Baibagish’s brother, and Khara Khula’s son), who was staying in Ufa for six months, from August to December 1630. A representative delegation from Khoshout and Torgout groups (representing *taishas* Dai-kush, Urguchiy, Taiza, Chinbey, and Tolbai) arrived at Ufa in November 1631.

As the tsar instructed, *dumnyi diak* Fedor Likhachev and *diak* Maksim Matyushkin received the delegation headed by Murzei, who later died in

Moscow, at the *Posolsky Prikaz* on January 12, 1632. The ambassadors said that “they do not have any charters from their *taishas* with them; they ordered to greet you orally.” Their major request was “that the tsar showed mercy to them and ordered to show his tsar’s respect to them; and ordered his officials to come to their *uluses* and not to levy war against them... and ordered to protect them from enemies.” In their turn, the *taishas* were ready to undertake the following: “whenever the tsar orders us to levy war against his enemies and those who disobey him, they are ready to give their lives for the tsar if he instructs them so.” However, ambassadors replied quite evasively when answering the major question (Do the *taishas* want to be vassals under the tsar’s control?): “We do not know whether the *taishas* want to be vassals under the tsar’s control.”⁴⁷

Envoys the Kalmyk *taishas* sent to Ufa, Tomsk, and Tobolsk in the 1630s revealed that the Torgout-Derbet group of Kalmyks was striving for developing mutually beneficial relations and establishing peaceful interaction, trade, allied and—particularly—military relations. Lively mutual relations were established between the Tomsk administration and Kalmyks in the middle of the 1630s. In 1636 alone, Kalmyks participated in three large-scale dealings, sent their ambassadors four times, and Kalmyk ambassadors took a *shert* on behalf of their *taishas*.⁴⁸ In the late 1620–1630s, this group of Kalmyks was still present in the area of the Irtysh, then the Ishim and Tobol, but mostly— in the steppes of Priuralie and Volga region. That is why it was no accident that Kalmyk envoys said at the *Posolsky Prikaz* in January 1632 that “their *taishas* roam from the town of Ufa to remote nomad camps, and it takes about two months; and when they come to Ufa to neighboring camps, they roam from Ufa for a month or about three weeks.”⁴⁹

There was certain tension between the Tobolsk administration and Kalmyk *taisha* Kuishi (Turu-Baihu), who demanded that Bukharian envoy Kazyi along with Kuchum Khan’s family and his followers held captive by Russians in 1634–1636 be extradited. After an attack launched together with his son-in-law Onbo (a Torgout) against Tara in September 1634 and a threat that “he will levy war against Tara, Tyumen, and Tobolsk,” Tobolsk *voevoda* M.M. Temkin-Rostovskiy had to let the Bukhara ambassador Kazyi go in order not to aggravate the situation. In August 1636, the Tobolsk *voevoda* compiled an in-depth report about all events connected with the relations with *taisha* Kuishi to the Kazan Palace *Prikaz* and personally to *boyar* and Prince Boris Mikhailovich Lykov. The official report by M.M. Temkin-Rostovskiy was brought to notice of Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich in October 1636. A note was made on the report by the tsar’s

order: to take precautions in Siberian towns against a probable attack of Kalmyks, restrict commerce with them and receive small groups of merchants only beyond the territory of towns, in places specifically prepared for this purpose, and to enhance the intelligence in Kalmyk *uluses*.⁵⁰

Thus, it is possible to observe two stages during the initial period (late 16th century–1630s) of establishing and developing relations between Russia and Oirats (Kalmyks). The mutual interest and drive to formalize the emerging relations by official state acts and to confirm them via diplomatic relations (i.e., the exchange of ambassadors) became evident from 1607 through the early 1620s. No written contractual relations survived as a result of the first official audience with Tsar Vasiliy Shuyskiy since the Kalmyk envoys took an oral *shert* at the audience. Both Charters issued by Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich (in 1618 and 1620) to Derbet *taisha* Dalai Batyr and Choros *taisha* Khara Khula, respectively, expressed respect to Kalmyks on the part of Russia, though the preliminary position of official authorities was quite different. According to the Charters, the tsarist administration guaranteed the territory and its high protection; Kalmyks, in their turn, guaranteed loyal military service.

Hence, it is clear that official relations between Russia and Kalmyks were being built on an immunity and contractual basis—that is with the independence of individual Kalmyk principalities as a part of the Russian state ensured—from the very beginning. However, starting from the 1620s the tsarist administration aspired to change the legal basis of its relations with Kalmyks, who were seeking Russia's protection rather than allegiance. They were gradually building relations based on vassalage principles as a part of a common state service: tsar, his administration, *voevoda*, and *taisha*. It is no accident that the tsarist administration declined requests from Kalmyk ambassadors seeking audiences with the tsar (thus, after 1620 there was only one audience in 1630, and no official instruments were created in its course) and restricted them to the level of *voevodas* from Siberian towns that dictated their terms of Kalmyks' allegiance—"direct vassalage for ever and ever." However, no official state acts confirmed such relations with the exception of numerous oral *sherts* that envoys from both "senior" and "minor" *taishas* took in front of *voevodas* on behalf of their *taishas*. Both parties were often breaking the *sherts* because the *sherts* lacked solid legal, political, or economic basis.

Conducting its policy, the tsarist administration sought to establish relations with Kalmyks based on "direct vassalage" principles and a common vertical state service. It was also likely aimed at the preservation of segregation among Kalmyk *taishas* (and their *uluses*) and placing them under the

control of particular Siberian regions (towns). That is why the tsar administration (Kazan Palace *Prikaz*, *Posolsky Prikaz*, and *voevodas*) negotiated with individual Kalmyk *taishas* and administered *sherts* to them.

Soon after the Dzungar Khanate headed by Erdeni Batur-huntaiji (a son of Choros *taisha* Khara Khula) was formed in 1635 and the second Oirat khanate—the Khoshout Khanate headed by Turu-Baihu (Gushi Khan, a brother of the Khoshout *taisha* Baibagas)—emerged in the areas of Kukunor adjacent to Tibet (1636–1638), the Russian policy toward Oirats was altered and differentiated (for those Oirats who remained within the bounds of its territory and for those who resided in the Khanate). The mutual relations between Russia and the Dzungar Khanate were developed on the basis of peaceful neighborhood and mutually beneficial trade since this was in the interests of safety for the borders of the Russian state and their protection against raids. In its turn, the Dzungar Khanate also needed Russia because its rulers had to rely upon its assistance to strengthen their power and international position. At the same time, the tsarist administration was trying to turn these rulers into Russian subjects by using peaceful diplomacy and maintaining mutual relations with the Khanate mostly at the level of Siberian towns.

After Dalai Batyr died in 1637, the large Derbet principedom broke up into individual principalities, and a group of Kalmyks headed by *taisha* Daichin (a son of Ho Urluk) was already in the steppes of Priuralie (between the Yaik and Volga rivers and Priuralie). Ho Urluk kept moving from the lower reach of the Yaik and Emba rivers to Daichin, his son, especially after an attack undertaken against him by Dzungar and Derbet *taishas*, as well as Kazakhs headed by Jangir Khan (Jakhangir Sultan). Daichin was seeking a permit from the Astrakhan authorities to roam between the Yaik and Volga rivers, close to Astrakhan, and refused to go back to remote camps near Siberian towns because of the threat imposed by “Chekur Kalmyks” (Dzungar, Derbet, Khoshout), *taisha* Dalai, and his brothers.⁵¹

When seeing Daichin's persistence and his assurances of his readiness to fight against “the tsar's enemies and betrayers,” as well as taking into account the complicated situation in the southeast of Russia due to the ongoing war against the Crimean Khanate and its allies, the tsarist administration allowed “him to roam along the Yaik and Volga rivers, close to Astrakhan” in 1636. However, after the truce in the inter-feudal fights Daichin roamed from Astrakhan to the “Ishim heights” and settled mostly close to the Yaik river.

In the late 1630s, the Kalmyk *taisha* Ho Urluk (after a short break in 1636–1638 he was fighting, according to some sources, “in the Mughal

and Chinese lands as well as in Kutany, and went to Bukharian towns in the year of 146") greatly developed his relations with Siberian towns. This was probably related to Daichin's moving to Siberia. In July 1639 he sent his envoys and merchants (the total of 53 people) to Tobolsk when roaming "up the Tobol River." The Tobolsk administration was suspicious of both Ho Urluk's vicinity and his apparent interest in Astrakhan. In order to find out Ho Urluk's intentions, they sent Cossack Luchka Vykhodtsov and Tatar Yenigeiko Yenbulatov to Ho Urluk and his son Yelden-*taisha* in July 1638, and Cossack Petrushka Filipov and Tatar Bulanko Santagulov—in November of the same year, and entrusted them mainly with reconnaissance missions.⁵²

Envoys Luchka Vykhodtsov and Petrushka Filipov found out the reasons why Ho Urluk and his children turned out in the Upper Ishim river: "there are too many people in *uluses*, and they hardly have space to locate their camps along the Volga River and in the Nogai steppe; they have nobody to trade with in the Nogai land either."⁵³ M.L. Kichikov assumed that Ho Urluk was moving from Siberian towns to Dzungaria for the forthcoming congress of Khalkhas and Oirat princes in 1640.

The Mongol–Oirat congress of khans and princes from Khalkha, Kukur, Dzungaria, and the Volga region (with the participation of representatives of the higher lama clergy) took place in September 1640 in the conditions of a truce in the interfeudal opposition in the territory of Dzungaria. The Great Code of the Nomads (Iki Tsaadzhin Bichig), which was adopted by the congress, paid most attention to the establishment of legal guarantees to prevent new civil strives, which were supported by oaths taken by the congress participants to avoid any conflicts or disagreement. However, these guarantees were violated by the Derbet–Torgout conflict, which burst out in 1641 (divorce of Ho Urluk's daughter and her husband, Derbet Daiching-Khoshuchi, who was killed in this conflict). Moreover, there was some tension between Baatar Khongtaiji and the children of *taishas* Dalai and Kundelen (Tobolsk centurion V. Klyapikov reported that "there was a great quarrel among them, and a war is unavoidable").

Wary of attacks from "remote Kalmyks" (Dzungars), Ho Urluk and his children moved to the right bank of the Yaik river in 1642 and were roaming along "the Astrakhan land" up to Kamysh-Samara.

The Tobolsk *voevoda* and *boyar*, Prince Grigoriy Semenovitch Kurakin, being guided by the official policy toward the Oirat issue (to bring them back to their former Siberian camps or to Dzungaria), decided to make use of this complicated situation between "remote" and "neighboring" Kal-

myks. On February 6, 1644 he sent his envoy, Ivan Maliyev, to Ablai-*taisha*, a son of Baibagish Khan, and Kundelen-*taisha* with an offer to “levy war upon the tsar’s enemy, Urluk-*taisha*.” However, at that time the Ho Urluk’s army of 10,000 soldiers, which launched a campaign against Kazyi *uluses* (Nogai Tatars headed by the murza Kazyi), was smashed in the gorges of the Kabardinian Mountains by Russian, Kabardinian, Cherkess, Kazyi, and Nogai armies. Ho Urluk, his son Keresan, and two grandsons, as well as eight thousand soldiers were killed in the battle.⁵⁴

The tsarist administration was dissatisfied with independent military actions undertaken by Kalmyk *taishas* and decided to punish them. The Samara and Astrakhan *voevodas*, L.A. Pleshcheyev and F.F. Volkonskiy, organized an attack against Kalmyk *uluses* and forced them behind the Yaik river. Moreover, “remote Kalmyks” intensified their pressure on Torgouts. Under the circumstances, Kalmyk *taishas* Daichin and Yelden urgently sent their envoys Bakshi Sabinov and Kulachi Darkhan Azrayev to Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich “to ask humbly to make them a part of the Russian state.” *Dumnyi diak* from the *Posolsky Prikaz* Grigoriy Lvov, who was aware of all Kalmyk-related issues, informed Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich about requests of the aforementioned Kalmyk *taishas* in June 1645: “So that the tsar ordered them to be under the tsar’s high control as direct vassals; and they will start serving him, the great tsar, and be loyal to him.” It is most likely that Mikhail Fedorovich failed to give an audience to the Kalmyk ambassadors because he was seriously ill at the time and died soon, on July 13, 1645. It can be assumed that requests and offers made by Daichin’s envoys were examined and dealt with by *boyar* Boris Ivanovich Morozov, the uncle of the new tsar—Alexey Mikhailovich, and G. Lvov. The *Posolsky Prikaz*, which favored the requests of Kalmyk *taishas*, said that an affirmative decision can be taken provided the *taishas* delivered some *amanats*^{xx} as well as undertook obligations “to be obedient to the Russian state” and to launch a campaign against the Crimean khan. However, the negotiations were interrupted because the Kalmyk ambassadors were not authorized to deal with the *amanat* issue, and then they were continued by the instruction from Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich, with the participation of a representative of the Ufa administration, strelets centurion A.B. Kudryavtsev, in the headquarters of *taisha* Lauzan in the presence of *taishas* Yelden and Shunkei. Nevertheless, this meeting, which took place in April 1646, also brought no positive results due to the absence of Daichin, and even A.B. Kudryavtsev’s threat that

^{xx} Translator’s note: *amanat*—a hostage.

“the tsar would send his soldiers, Bashkirs and Tatars, to fight you” had no effect on the *taishas*.⁵⁵ *Taisha* Daichin was en route from Tibet at that time and came back to his *uluses* only in 1647.

The major reason for the breakdown of these negotiations was the aggravation of relations with Bashkirs because of the unsettled issue of camps in the Upper Yaik river. Therefore, one of the first actions taken as an attempt to settle issues of conflicts with Bashkirs and camps was Daichin's sending his envoys Batyrka and Bastyak to Ufa in 1648, and these envoys were received by *voevoda* Dmitri Dolgorukov and ambassador, *boyar*'s son from Ufa Vladimir Golubtsov. Kalmyk envoys were instructed to tell Daichin to “leave Bashkir lands for his former remote camps in Black Sands and the Irgiz river, where he used to have his camps.” Daichin's envoys gave a *shert* to the *voevoda* and ambassador on behalf of Daichin, as well as his brothers and children, nephews and people from *uluses* “not to levy war against the tsar's towns and uyezds, and not to fight against the tsar's people, and not to capture them.”⁵⁶ The same terms and conditions of the *shert* were accepted by “high-ranking officials Dural-Tarkhan and Zurgachiy” in the Daichin's headquarters before the ambassador V.K. Golubtsov, who came to Daichin in 1648.

In view of repeated appeals from Kalmyks regarding Bashkir raids, the Ufa *voevoda* and Prince Dmitri Dolgorukov convened Bashkir elders by the tsarist administration's instruction in September 1648 and announced that “Kalmyk *taishas* began roaming with all of their *uluses* along the Yaik, Or', Kiil, Sakmar, and other rivers, and Bashkirs were instructed long ago not to attack Kalmyk *uluses* and not to take any cattle or prisoners from them. Bashkirs were blamed with constant attacks against Kalmyks, provoking them and embittering them to the extent that made them intrude not only in the Ufa *uyezd* but also in the Kazan and Samara ones as well.”⁵⁷ The *voevoda* instructed the Bashkir rulers not to quarrel with Kalmyks any more and not to attack them.

At the same time, the tsar administration suggested in its Charter of July 1649 that Daichin should go away from the Yaik and Emba rivers to put an end to clashes with Bashkirs. The same Charter informed Daichin that *voevodas* of Astrakhan, Ufa, and other towns had been instructed not to attack Kalmyks and to exchange prisoners.

In early 1649 *uluses* of the Khoshout *taisha* Kundelen-Ubasha and Derbet *taisha* Dayan-Ombo with the population of about 20,000 people roamed to the Emba river after another strife in Dzungaria. Due to certain problems with solving the issue about pasture territories, *taishas* Daichin and Lauzan had to ask the Astrakhan authorities to let them roam not only

between the two rivers but also along the left and right banks of the Volga river. However, envoys of *taisha* Lauzan were arrested by the Astrakhan *voevoda*'s order because "Lauzan's people attacked and captured the tsar's people, Russians and Tatars, who were going to the Cossack village from Moscow to Astrakhan." In response, "Lauzan came to Astrakhan and captured the tsar's people—Russians and Nogai Tatars."⁵⁸

Having received a decree from Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich and Charter of the *Posolsky Prikaz* signed by *dumnyi diak* M. Volosheninov on September 9, 1649, Ufa *voevoda* F.Ya. Miloslavskiy sent a delegation of four representatives headed by an official from Ufa, Ivan Ivanovich Onuchin, as an ambassador to *taisha* Daichin on September 21. The main goal set for Ivan Onuchin was to establish the true reasons of the conflict between residents of Astrakhan and Kalmyks, and to persuade Kalmyks to leave for "their former remote camps," as well as to put an end to the feud with Bashkirs.

A meeting between Ivan Onuchin and Daichin as the main Kalmyk *taisha* took place on November 8, 1649. Ivan Onuchin placed the blame on Daichin for breaking the *shert* "to be under control of the great tsar... together with all his Kolmaki people and obey him" taken by his ancestors, but Daichin was quite frank and firm. He said, "our fathers and grandfathers have never been anybody's vassals. Our books say we have never been anybody's vassals as well but we live on our own and are our own masters and have our *ulus* people. Now we are afraid of nothing but the god; and we have been sending our envoys on matters of peace and for consultations." Daichin was right to a degree in this respect because *taishas'* envoys took *sherts* orally.

Ivan Onuchin suggested: "You had better roam in your former remote camps instead of the territory between the Yaik and Volga rivers where Kalmyks have never roamed before; and you should not roam in the tsar's lands that are *yasak* payers." Daichin's reply was as follows: "This is god's land and water and the territory where we and Nogai roam now used to belong to the Nogai... but now they, the Nogai, are our vassals. They used to roam in the lands and along the rivers; so why cannot we roam in these places now? Moreover, we do not have any other place to roam."⁵⁹

Negotiations about camps between the two rivers were continued in 1650 in Ufa and Astrakhan between the local authorities and envoys from Daichin and Lauzan. The Ufa and Astrakhan authorities were dealing with issues of camps and trade based on the former conditions—delivery of *amanats*, as well as Yedisian and Nogai Tatars, who joined the Kalmyks. Daichin's envoys had to give a *shert* that "Kalmyks will always be obedient, ready to serve and to be loyal, and will fight without sparing their

lives against those who disobey the tsar.”⁶⁰ However, later on neither of the parties fulfilled these obligations: the *taishas* did not want to deliver *amanats* or to be obedient, and the tsar administration did not want to solve the issue of camps without *amanats*.

The *Studies of History of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Pre-Revolutionary Period* (Moscow, 1967, 111) states that “the Russian government’s position regarding the issue of camps was completely revised in 1655–1657.” The reason was that the war between Russia and Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita*) with the participation of Sweden, Turkey, and its vassal states—Moldova and the Crimean Khanate, which began in 1654, required mobilization of all resources of the Russian state⁶¹ and involvement of additional military forces. That period was also marked by Kalmyks’ active appeals to the authorities to solve the territorial problem, as well as by their stating their intention to serve for the Russian state “solely” and “loyally.”

Taking into account the complicated military situation in the southwest of Russia and readiness of Kalmyks to take part in the war against Turkey and the Crimean Khanate, the positive resolution of territorial and commercial problems was accelerated. The *shert* instrument of February 4, 1655 was one of the first normative documents to mark the beginning of a new stage of contractual relations between Russia and Kalmyks, which would finally settle the Russian–Kalmyk relations. According to the document, Kalmyk ambassadors Dural-Tarkhan, Seren-*taisha*, and Chokul-zaisang took a *shert* to great Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich on behalf of *taishas* Daichin, Lauzan, Sanjin, Monchak, and Nim Seren as well as on behalf of their brothers, children, nephews, and all *ulus* people to be “always obedient,” to serve the tsar, to take part in military actions, not to have any relations with Russia’s enemies, not to fight against the tsar’s subjects, and not to rob them.

“The god’s anger, penalty and damnation”⁶² would have fallen on their lot if they had violated the terms stipulated by the *shert* instrument. According to this very first written document, Kalmyks taking the Russian allegiance preserved independence and autonomy as a part of the Russian state but were to comply with some mandatory provisions, mainly of military and political nature. At the same time, central institutions were authorized to instruct boyars and *voevodas* whenever it was necessary so that they could charge Kalmyks with “all kinds of the tsar’s affairs” through authorized people (messengers). It was for the first time that a *shert* instrument was signed by a *taisha*’s representative, clerk Batyrka, in the Kalmyk language. The *Posolsky Prikaz* was thoroughly preparing the

first draft of a written *shert* instrument for almost a year. Though the *Posolsky Prikaz* was extremely busy due to the beginning of the war with the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth (*Rzeczpospolita*) and Turkey, the institution paid special attention to the preparation of the draft *shert* by diplomats as well as to organizing negotiations and coordination with *taishas* in 1654. That is why, being a legally effective document, the *shert* instrument of February 4, 1655 became a part of the *Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire, Volume I*.

In connection with Kalmyks' signing of the allegiance instrument on February 4, 1655, the *Posolsky Prikaz* prepared a Charter upon an instruction of Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich and sent it out to *voevodas* of Astrakhan, Kazan, and other towns in the Volga region in April of the same year. It was the first time when the central authorities had officially secured particular territory for Kalmyks in the Charter—"uluses were ordered to roam along the Volga River, in the Nogai steppe, Akhtub, Beluzhie and near our towns where they want to roam"—and prohibited Russian people, Bashkirs, and foreign citizens "to treat Kalmyks badly."⁶³

According to the agreement to be with "the tsar's military men together," the tsar issued his ukase about drafting Kalmyks to fight the Crimean Khanate in the spring of the same year. Kalmyk regiments were to join Don Cossacks and *hetman*^{xxi} of the Zaporozhye troops Bogdan Khmelnytskyi. At the same time, the Crimean Khan and Persian Shah tried to prevent Kalmyks from joining Russia on a permanent basis and win them over to their cause. However, Kalmyks made their choice—to be loyal to Russia and fight its enemies together. Nevertheless, the tsar administration was worried and demanded that Kalmyk *taishas* sign a new *shert*, so as to prevent any possible rapprochement of Kalmyks with Russia's enemies. In this complicated situation, Astrakhan *voevoda* V.G. Romodanovskiy followed the instructions from the central authorities and suggested that the *taishas* sign the *shert* on their own and sent Kalmyk *amanats* to Astrakhan.

Monchak, one of Daichin's son, and Manzhik signed the first *shert* charter on March 30, 1657. Daichin and Monchak sent the first Kalmyk *amanats* (three hostages)—close relatives of *taishas*—to Astrakhan the

^{xxi} *Hetman* was the title of the second highest military commander (after the monarch) used in 15th to 18th century Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, known from 1569 to 1795 as the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth. This title was also used among the Cossacks of Ukraine and Russia since the 16th century and by the Czechs in Bohemia during the Hussite Wars of the 15th century. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hetman>)

same year. Kalmyk *amanats* were granted a ceremonial welcome and *shert* was administered to them.

The *shert* instrument of 1657 introduced radical changes in the mutual relations between Russia and Kalmyks. In contrast to the previous *sherts* (oral or written), which did not define the relations precisely—"to be obedient for ever and ever"—and were based mainly on obsolete vassalage principles ("under the high tsar's control"), the new *shert* instrument provided a specific definition ("to be in the everlasting allegiance and obedience") and reflected the formula of "tsar and serf" relations—a distinctive core of any autocratic monarchy. That is why, having joined Russia and having found itself within the Russian geopolitical space, Kalmykia had to change its political and social status and enter into state allegiance relations. The new terms of relations as a part of Russia—implicit obedience of subjects and absolute power of the ruler—were reflected in the letter from major *taisha* Daichin to Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich dated June 1657 where the Kalmyk ruler recognized his personal loyalty to the tsar and referred to himself as a serf of the great tsar.⁶⁴ When this official formula emerged, a new stage of relations between Russia and Kalmyks was formed—voluntary state allegiance. At the same time, Kalmyk people did not become, so to say, Russian citizens.

Russia approved of and recognized the fact of Kalmyks' voluntarily joining Russia, and officially granted this territory to its newly acquired subjects: "in summer they are to roam from Astrakhan and upstream on both banks of the Volga river, and nobody may prevent them from moving; and in winter they are to roam in Mochagi" (a rushy coast of the Caspian Sea), and granted them the right to free trade in towns of the Volga region in the Charter issued by the *Posolsky Prikaz* on behalf of the great tsar on July 6, 1657. One of the key obligations of Kalmyks as subjects was their participation in Russian military campaigns: "to go to the Crimea for the war along with Astrakhan militaries." In fact, Kalmyks joined the Azov campaign the same year and defeated the Kazyi Tatars that were under Turkey's protectorate.⁶⁵

Moreover, when Kalmykia became a part of the Russian state and undertook the following obligation: "we, *taishas*, as well as our children and Kalmyks from our *uluses* shall not communicate with the Turkish sultan or the Crimean khan or join them," it effectively lost its status of a legal entity in foreign relations. Chief Kalmyk *taishas* became subjects and state officials receiving remuneration.

The *shert* instrument of 1657 defined the mechanism of complying with and adhering to contractual obligations—Kalmyk *taishas* were to

deliver *amanats*. However, the tsar administration did not interfere with Kalmyks' internal affairs during the period. The *shert* instrument did not cover any issues related to local government, the latter remaining at Kalmyk *taishas*' discretion.

The terms for Kalmyks to take the Russian allegiance were specified and confirmed by two *shert* instruments of 1661. They were preceded by a number of events that made the tsar administration take a decision to demand that Kalmyk *taishas* sign new obligations. In the late 1650s, the Crimean Khanate attempted in vain to make Kalmyks come over to its side. Military actions taken by the Russian–Ukrainian army against Polish and Crimean troops happened to be unsuccessful in Ukraine in 1660.⁶⁶ On the whole, it seems to be related to the ongoing military actions of Russia against Poland and Sweden, the landing operation of Turkish troops in the vicinity of Azov, actions of the Crimean Khan, and signing the unfavorable “eternal Peace of Cardis” with Sweden in June 1661.

In this complicated military situation in the southeast of Russia, the tsar administration took a number of emergency measures to mobilize its military resources. Among other things, certain emphasis was laid on the Kalmyk cavalry in battles against the Polish and Crimean–Turkish troops. To engage Kalmyks in the war at the southern border and to implement a diplomatic mission, a representative of central authorities, Ivan Savinovich Gorokhov, *dumnyi diak* from the *Posolsky Prikaz*, visited *taisha* Daichin in February 1661. He passed an ukase issued by Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich to the *taisha*, which instructed “*taisha* Daichin to send a note to the Crimean Khan to leave the Polish King alone and not to assist him.” If the Crimean Khan did not leave him alone and did not suspend military actions against Russia, “Kalmyks would levy war against Crimean yurts.”

As a result of negotiations between Ivan Gorokhov and *taisha* Daichin, the terms of the agreement were elaborated and envoys Zorguchi Tarkhan and Dizan Kashka gave a *shert* to Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich on behalf of *taishas* Daichin and Monchak in the presence of the tsarist administration's envoy for military issues to Kalmykia, Prince Kaspulat Mutsalovich Cherkasskiy. The *shert* instrument emphasized that the agreement was made “upon an instruction of His Majesty” meaning that it was mandatory for the subjects. According to the agreement, Kalmyks were “to send Kalmyk military men to levy war against Crimean *uluses* so that Kalmyks neither had peaceful relations nor joined the Crimean Khan, but had eternal peaceful relations and were loyal to His Majesty's people and always assisted Russian people.”⁶⁷ The tsarist administration, in its turn, promised

that "His Majesty's people will never disturb you [Kalmyks—*K.M.*]," and Kalmyks will be receiving state wages for their service.

According to the agreement, a list of Kalmyk militaries with the total number up to 10,000 horsemen was compiled. *Taisha* Monchak signed the list as early as June 16, of the same year. Kalmyks and Don Cossacks (represented by Fedor Budan and Stepan Razin) with the participation of Ivan Gorokhov and Prince Kaspulat Cherkasskiy agreed upon plans of joint military actions against Turkish–Crimean troops in February–March 1661. According to the report from the Astrakhan *voevoda* and *boyar*, Prince Grigoriy Sanchuleyevich Cherkasskiy, sent to Moscow in the autumn of 1661, "*taishas* Daichin and Monchak sent their military men to the Crimea, Azov and Basney. As for Manzhin-*taisha*, he levied war against *uluses* of Small and Big Nogai roaming in Kabarda and Kumyki." The following report sent to the tsar read, "Near the Crimea, military men of Kalmyk *taishas* Monchak Budan, Cheren, Seren, and their people killed the Crimean Sarp-murza, whose numerous people used to levy war against your Ukrainian towns, and they also killed seven thousand of his Crimean people who joined him for the battle, and captured many Crimean *uluses* and took herds of cattle with them."⁶⁸ At the same time, one should mention that Kalmyks undertook other successful actions in the aforementioned region upon instructions from the tsarist administration even as early as before signing the *shert* in June 1661.

The *shert* instruments of 1655, 1657, and 1661 (June) defined the status of Kalmykia and stipulated the principles of relations between Russia and Kalmyks. In compliance with their obligations and their new status, Kalmyks became actively involved in fighting Russia's enemies. However, the tsarist administration decided to administer a new *shert* to Kalmyk *taishas* all at once in the late 1661. *Dumnyi diak* Ivan Gorokhov came to Kalmykia on this special mission again. There are two points of view regarding the reasons for such a sudden and prompt *shert* administration to Kalmyks in the literature. According to one of them, it was required to engage Kalmyks in military actions. Serious clashes that broke out between Kalmyks and Bashkirs as well as between Chuvash and Mari account for the other point of view.⁶⁹ We believe that the authentic reason was this: the Kalmyk community of the Volga region had been through a change of its leadership in the early 1660s, and the tsarist administration noticed this in due time.

Military, organizational and other events that happened in 1661 proved that *taisha* Monchak was playing an ever-increasing role. As a matter of fact, he consolidated almost all large Kalmyk feudal lords. Daichin was

losing his authority and his role in the political life of the Kalmyk community virtually came to nothing. He practically lost control over his people in 1661 in view of his age. It was no accident that Daichin said to Ivan Gorokhov as early as the beginning of 1661 that “Monchak is a lord and I am old, and *ulus* people want to see Monchak as their ruler.”⁷⁰

On December 9, 1661, *taisha* Monchak in the presence of *dumnyi diak* Ivan Gorokhov, Nogai, Yedisan, Yembuluk, and Malisbash morzalar, and Astrakhan *voevoda* gave an oath on his own behalf and on behalf of his father, Daichin, the *taisha*'s nephew Manzhik, and on behalf of other Kalmyk *taishas*, as well as on behalf of all chieftains roaming with them (Nogai, Yedisan, Yembuluk, Malisbash, and Kelencha morzalar) “to be loyal and obedient for ever and ever” to Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich, to serve faithfully to him, “to fight His Majesty's betrayers and those who disobey him until the death” and “to levy war” against his enemies upon his instruction. As compared to the previous *sherts*, this one provided a more detailed wording of the Kalmyk *taisha*'s obligations “not to contact anyone who disobeys the tsar or to support his betrayers” and “not to contact, join, or maintain peace with either the Turkish Sultan, Kyzyl Basha Shah, the Crimean Khan, or the Azov beys from Temruki, Tabany, Besleneysy, and Kumyki with their *taishas*... and not to provide them with weapons, horses or military people.”⁷¹ In contrast to the previous ones, a high-ranking official from the tsarist administration—Astrakhan governor and *boyar*, Prince Grigoriy Cherkasskiy authorized by the central Russian authorities to organize the armed forces in southeast Russia—administered the *shert* on behalf of Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich.

The *shert* instrument of December 9, 1661 confirms the institute of the tsar administration's commissioners (messengers) stipulated by the *shert* instrument of 1655. As it has already been mentioned, prince Kaspulat Cherkasskiy, a nephew of *boyar* Grigoriy Cherkasskiy, was one of the first commissioners on military issues to Kalmykia in the 1660s.

Contractual documents dated before the 1660s stipulated a mechanism of complying with the conditions agreed upon: Kalmyks were to deliver *amanats*. As for the two *shert* instruments dated 1661, they did not include the institute of *amanats* as a means to make Kalmyks comply with the agreements. Nevertheless, the tsar administration managed to find a somewhat veiled but efficient approach to ensure compliance with mutual obligations a bit later. The Russian administration provided Kalmyk rulers (*taisha* and his close relatives) with regular payment to be paid by the state and considered them as special state officials directly subordinate to the great tsar.

The Kalmyks' participation in military actions and battles as well as testimonies given based on Buddhist ceremonies—"I kiss my god *Burkhan*^{xxii} and the book of prayers Bichig, and I lick my prayer beads and my knife and put the knife next to my throat"⁷²—served as guarantees of their compliance with their obligations. People taking the oath were to emphasize that if Kalmyks violated the *shert*, they would incur the God's anger and he would punish them with his burning sword, and they would be damned according to their Kalmyk faith. The *shert* taken by *taisha* Monchak personally on December 9, 1661 included a very serious psychological drive: "my enemy will cut my throat with the knife that I, *taisha* Bunchuk, unsheathe, lick and put next to my throat."

It is possible to trace another feature in the later *shert* instruments proving that Kalmyk *ulus*es from the Volga region started joining together under the control of one ruler starting in the middle of the 17th century. All three documents (they were later made a part of the Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire as legal regulations) noted that it was the "top" *taisha* (*akhalakchi taisha*)—Daichin and his son Monchak—who was a key figure that commanded real authority; *taisha* Monchak was a key figure referred to in the last *shert*.

Regulations of 1655, 1657, and 1661 finalized the Russian allegiance of Kalmyks and defined their territory. Starting from the second half of the 17th century, Kalmyks found a permanent and vast territory—both banks of the Volga river (meaning the right and left banks) from Astrakhan to Tsaritsyn and Samara, towards the Don steppes—where they were allowed to roam freely and quietly and trade for free, which not only promoted the economic development and economic relations in the region, but also stimulated the Kalmyks' interest in the Russian protection. Russia, in turn, acquired a reliable and faithful ally—Kalmyks, who were capable of defending it and standing up for its interests skillfully and fearlessly. It is worth mentioning that the territory for Kalmyks to roam was secured by not only the tsar's Charter of July 6, 1657 but also by Clause 41, Chapter XVI of the *Sobornoe ulozhenie*^{xxiii} dated 1649: "It is prohibited to take away the lands from those who serve as state officials" and who obtained the land "based on the tsar's charters or *boyars'* charters."⁷³

All of the factors mentioned above, confirm both *de facto* and *de jure* that Russia taking Kalmyks under its protectorate and Kalmyks becoming

^{xxii} Translator's note: *Burkhan*—"Buddha" in several Turkic and Mongolic languages.

^{xxiii} Translator's note: *Sobornoe ulozhenie*—an all-Russian Code of Laws, promulgated in 1649 by the *Zemsky Sobor*.

a part of Russia developed and established their mutual relations jointly and in a coordinated way; based on standard and regulatory principles and on a voluntary basis for both parties. They coordinated political and military issues through duly authorized messengers from both parties who occupied a special position (at the level of envoys). This type of allegiance on the part of the Kalmyk people's and its relations with Russia can be explained by the fact that "it is not the power of the Russian arms that conquered Kalmyks; they recognized the power of the state they lived in on their own free will."⁷⁴

When Kalmyks finally settled within a particular territory of Russia, they were consolidated as one people. One can say for sure that a new entity emerged in Russia at that time, that is, Kalmykia as a special part of Russia. Kalmykia's allegiance was mainly of political and state nature (at the same time, one should not rule out a touch of social allegiance either): the allegiance was based on the feeling of the political and territorial unity as well as on the awareness about common dangers from other countries threatening both the Kalmyk people and the southern territories of Russia. That is why the conditions of Kalmykia's being a part of the Russian state agreed upon by both of the parties and embodied in regulatory documents were basically federal by their nature. Russia provided Kalmyks with a territory, its protection, independence in managing their internal affairs, as well as with a special status of political autonomy. In their turn, Kalmyks guaranteed to serve Russia faithfully, to participate in joint military actions, and not to have any relations with Russian enemies.

Once the place for their development was selected and defined officially and as they started consolidating under the control of a single ruler, Kalmyks from the Volga region became a segregated and independent formation by the middle of the 17th century. They were united based on their ethnic composition and developing social and political position as well as their official religion—Buddhism—Lamaism. Due to the aforementioned processes, a common administrative and military control system, as well as legal system, began forming inside the Kalmyk society. The process of forming the Kalmyk ethnopolitical institution—a feudal khanate—was over in the Volga region by that time. It is unlikely that the emergence of Oirat Khanates (Dzungar, Khoshout, and Kalmyk), in different parts of Eurasia almost simultaneously, was a mere coincidence. It is most probable that it was an objective factor of Oirats ethnogenesis—a smooth rise, possibly similar to the Renaissance. The following external political conditions contributed to the formation of internal factors of Kalmykia's statehood: the central Russian authorities were watching in-

ternal affairs of Kalmyks closely, and hardly interfered with them; Russians pursued a policy that everything happening in its territory was to be useful and beneficial for the Russian state.

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CHAPTER 2

The Kalmyk Khanate as a Part of Russia (mid-17th–Second Half of 18th Centuries)

The political autonomy of the Kalmyk Khanate (mid-17th–1st quarter of 18th centuries)

The objective factors of Kalmyks' social, political, state, and economic development finally resulted in the formation of the national state in the form of a khanate within Russia. Sharing the opinion expressed by M.L. Kichikov, we can say that the actual acknowledgment and formation of the Kalmyk Khanate took place in 1664 when the tsarist administration presented *taisha* Monchak with the state authority symbols—a silver gold-plated mace decorated with jasper, as well as a banner with the Russian state emblem in the middle (a double eagle and a horseman striking a serpent) combined with a crescent, an oriental symbol. In honor of Monchak's official recognition as the ruler of Kalmykia, gifts of value, sword, pistols, carbine, and ammunition were presented to him.¹

As it was necessary to keep in touch with the Kalmyk Khanate on a permanent basis, a Russian state territorial administration—Kalmyk *Prikaz*, a department of the Posolsky *Prikaz*, along with Malorossiia *Prikaz*, Smolensk *Prikaz*, Lithuania *Prikaz*, etc.—was established in 1661. The key objective of the Kalmyk *Prikaz* was to organize and coordinate the military involvement of Kalmyks, and to establish relations between the central authorities and Kalmyks. *Boyar* and Prince Vasiliy Grigoriyevich Romodanovskiy, who used to be the Astrakhan *voevoda*, and *dumnyi diak* Ivan Savinovich Gorokhov, a gifted diplomat and one of the active promoters of the *shert* records making and administration to Kalmyk *taishas* in the 1650–1660s, headed the Kalmyk *Prikaz*.²

The population of the Kalmyk Khanate stabilized and amounted to over 400 thousand people in the early 1660s. While in 1660 the Kalmykia

population was equal to more than 300 thousand people along with Derbets, who joined them in 1642 and 1660, another 100 thousand people joined them in 1663 at the expense of the Khoshout–Derbet group led by *taisha* Kundelen and his son Dorzhi, who came from Dzungaria. All groups of Kalmyks that arrived in 1642, 1660, and 1663 joined *uluses* of *taisha* Monchak, and recognized his authority and Russian allegiance.³ Not only Torgouts and Derbets formed a part of the Kalmyk Khanate's population. *Ulus* people of some Junghar and Khoshout *taishas*, along with Nogai, Yedisan, Yembuluk, Malibash, Altıul, and Turkmen murzas were a part of it as well.

Feudal lords and common nomads (common people—*Kharchud*—depended on *ulus* rulers) formed the basis of the social structure in the Kalmyk feudal society. It is an obvious simplification to consider the Kalmyk feudal society as consisting only of exploiters and exploited. The society was stratified to a certain degree, that is, it was comprised of several classes having their own legal status, whose rights and obligations were stipulated both by regular legal norms and the Great Code of the Nomads, in 1640.

Noyons, or princes, formed the ruling class in the Kalmyk feudal society. They considered themselves as “the blue blood” people. *Taishas* (the title of Chinese origin meaning “the great mentor” literally) were on the top level. *Taishas* or the upper class came under “big” *taishas*—ruling or chief princes who inherited the title along with *uluses*, people, cattle, and camping territory (nutug), “middle” *taishas* (the Great Code provided for a limited number of *taishas*) and “junior” *taishas*—lords of a minor rank, vassals of their chief prince. According to the Great Code, *tabunangs* (sons-in-law and brothers-in-law, blood relatives of the chief *taisha*), high-ranking officials (four rulers), and court officers belonged to the feudal class. Feudal lords were interrelated through the vassalage system. *Zaisangs* (*baga noyods*—junior lords, rulers of the Aimak) as well as *ulus* (Aimak) officials—*dargah* (chief), *demchi* (assistant chief), *zargachi* (judge), etc. belong to the lower hierarchy of feudal lords. Resources available in the *taisha*'s personal possession—domain—defined his position and degree of his authority. That is why it is not accidental that *taishas* were fighting violently for their control over *uluses*, cattle, and people.

“Big” *taishas* acted as civil administration as well as chief judges in their *uluses*; they also distributed territories where nomads roamed between *uluses*. “Junior” *taishas* were under control of “big” ones and were to pay tribute (*alban*) in cattle and render other services to them as well as take part in military campaigns (it was an important source of their enrichment because of captured trophies and *jasys*—captives).

Servants rendering various services to their “big” or “junior” *taishas* and participating in battles next to them as well as distinguished soldiers gradually replenished the feudal clan in the Kalmyk society. Servants and soldiers who saved their *taisha*’s life in a battle or rendered other kinds of important services to them were given a special status—*darhan* (a privileged class enjoying free access to *taisha*; they were exempted from all duties and taxes, as well as indemnified for the first nine offences they could commit). The *darhan* title was inherited. That is why it is not entirely right to consider *darhans* as holding an in-between position in the Kalmyk society.⁴

Clergy also formed a privileged social group in the Kalmyk society. It gained power when Kalmyks started practicing Lamaism in the first quarter of the 17th century. The legal status of the clergy was formed when the Great Code was passed. It legitimized Lamaism as the official state religion in the entire territory of Mongolia and all khanates and princedoms that were parts of the country. The conversion to Lamaism was an important factor that strengthened the Kalmyk statehood at the initial stage of its formation. When Buddhism replaced shamanism, Kalmyk *noyons* started claiming their heavenly (or divine) origin and their “golden ancestry” (from Genghis Khan).

When Lamaism became the state religion, Kalmyk *taishas* started giving cattle, ground (*jisa*) and serfs to high-ranking clergy (lamas) and monasteries (*sume* and *khiid*) on a broad scale. The book *Studies of History of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. Pre-Revolutionary Period* states that *taisha* Daichin gave 20 thousand colts to the senior lama (Khutughtu). I.Ya. Zlatkin said that Zaya-Pandita and other lamas got rich gifts from princes in 1645: Zaya-Pandita got 10 thousand horses, other senior lamas got one thousand and five hundred horses each, low-ranking lamas got 100, 60 or 10 horses each.⁵ At the same time, Kalmyk *taishas* gave their serfs (whole wagons of them) as well as boys to lamas and *khuruls* (monasteries) to become their pupils (*shabi*). It resulted in the *shabi* institution (*khurul*’s serfs). Zaya-Pandita got 40 *bandimanzhiks* (boys), 40 wagons, etc. from a number of *taishas* in 1658.⁶

The hierarchy of the Lamaist church was rather complicated. The Dalai Lama of Tibet was the supreme person in the Lamaist church. He had his governors (*Khutughtus*) among Mongols and Oirats (Kalmyks). *Rabjampa* (an academic degree of clergy) Zaya-Pandita (originator of the Kalmyk written language and translation of books in Kalmyk) was the first *Khutughtu* of Oirats since 1639.

Lamas (senior clergymen), *chos-rje-gelyungs* (heads of *khuruls*, senior priests), *bagshis* (*khurul* abbots), *dge-tshuls* (ministers), *amchi-gelyungs*

(priests-healers) and *zayagachi* (prophets) were the chief Lamaism missionaries in Kalmykia.⁷

People from Kalmyk *uluses* depending on their feudal lords were known as *Kharchud* ("plebeians"). They had their own households and cattle but were deprived of the right to own grazing lands. "Plebeians" depended on their owners (*ezens*) personally, who managed their serfs on their own will (they could sell or give them as gifts). Serfs could not leave their master. According to the law, a serf leaving the master was declared a runaway and was subjected to immediate return to the master. The Code said, "If you meet escapers, you can seize one half of their property and must bring them back."⁸ Serious fines in terms of property were applicable to princes harboring escapers. "Plebeians" bore financial liability for the owner: they were a part of the list of penal sanctions. The Great Code said, "If chief princes run away from the enemy under any pretence, they must pay a fine in the amount of one hundred coats of mail, one hundred camels, 50 wagons of people (families) and one thousand horses; ...junior princes must pay ten coats of mail, ten camels, ten wagons of people and one hundred horses."⁹

Farmer serfs had to pay a rent in kind to their masters in the following forms: cattle and animal products, labor service (care and maintenance of the master's livestock, collection of fuel, etc.), service at the feudal lord's headquarters, military service, participation in battue hunts, and transportation duty.

Those who were serving directly at the prince's court and were working as servants, obviously, were regarded as bondmen (*kubegud*).

When Lamaism was accepted and the clergy class, as well as monasteries (*khuruls*) emerged, one more group of dependent peasants (*shabis*) appeared. The first references to serfs of Lama clergy and *khuruls* date back to the 1640s. Primarily new peasants (*shabis*) were serfs contributed by khans, *noyons* and *zaisangs* to clergy and *khuruls* as well as peasants who were bought or became *khurul's* serfs on their own will.

Shabis belonging to *khuruls* were carrying out all kinds of activities related to taking care of all their numerous cattle (haymaking, pasturage, cow milking, sheepshearing, assisting at delivery of the litter, etc.). In addition to taking care of the cattle, *shabis* were to keep the *khurul's* territory clean, make repairs, store up fuel, process animal products, etc. *Shabis* personally belonging to the clergy were their home servants. They were to take care of their personal cattle, as well as make cloths for them, wash, cook, etc.¹⁰

Kalmyks were engaged mainly in household crafts. Craftsmen having the status of serfs were working at *khotons* in Kalmyk *uluses*. Processing

wool and leather of domestic animals and making various products from them was one of the most important branches of handicraft trade. Craftsmen supplied enough woodwork (saddles, furniture, dishes, pipes, etc.) as well. Goldsmiths, woodworkers, and locksmiths worked along with them.¹¹ There were simple blacksmith shops where the necessary iron products were made (armor, coats of mail, arrow-heads, etc.) in Kalmyk *uluses*. Kalmyk craftsmen were also making a lot of bows and arrows.

Judging by the standard source (the Great Code), one can assume that since Kalmyks had to wage war most of the time, in addition to *arats* (the cattle breeder serfs) and serfs there were slaves (*tsoohor*) as well (mainly *jasyrs*—captives) in the Kalmyk society. Slaves were not subjects of legal relations in the Kalmyk society. Slavery as a social pattern was not widespread in Kalmyk *uluses* since there was no work for slaves there (Kalmyks could cope with cattle breeding without any assistance). It was also difficult to guard slaves in nomadic conditions. Kalmyks sold prisoners of war and peaceful populace as *jasyrs* at slave markets. Kalmyk *taishas* considered slave trade as another source of riches.

Though the literature and documented sources available on the history of Oirats including Kalmyks and Mongols belonging to the 16–17th centuries provide only fragmentary and sometimes conflicting information, they make it possible to envisage the social and state system of the Kalmyk Khanate that formed by the middle of the 17th century to a certain degree.¹² Our opinion is based on the fact that, first of all, general features of the public, administrative, and political system of the Dzungar Khanate were still having a material effect on the development pattern of tribes that sprang from it by the middle of the 17th century; secondly, Dzungar, Mongol, and Kalmyk feudal lords were guided by the same law that they adopted jointly in 1640—by the Great Code, also known as “the Steppe Code.”

Daichin's rise began in the 1640s, particularly after the death of Ho Urluk (his father) in 1644, and this resulted in the unification of Kalmyk *uluses*, centralization of authority in his hands and his adopting the status of the chief ruler in the Kalmyk *uluses* in the territories around the Ural and the Volga.

Being the chief ruler at that time, Daichin inherited the title of *akha-lakchi-taisha* (the ruling or chief *taisha*—the chief prince). When he punished his brothers Yelden and Lauzan, who opposed the unification process, Daichin, as a matter of fact, became the first all-Kalmyk ruler in the 1650s. The supreme spiritual ruler of Tibet, the Dalai Lama, confirmed the fact by granting the khan's title in 1650. However, Daichin refused to

take the symbols of state authority and referred to himself as a khan for a long time.¹³ This was probably related to the fact that Kalmyks were actively engaged in defining their camping territory and finally adopting the Russian allegiance. Under the circumstances, Daichin probably did not want to cause any suspicion or doubt in the tsarist administration. In fact, Daichin started referring to himself as a khan only when the processes of finalizing the territorial problem and Kalmyks' voluntary joining Russia as well as after successful military actions on the part of Russia in the middle of the 17th century. Thereby, the statehood of the Kalmyk people had an elite nature, that is, the elite that was formed on the basis of its origin (clans of Buigo Urluk, Zulzukan Urluk, Ho Urluk, Daichin, Monchak, etc.) was ruling in the country.

The executive power and functions of the commander and supreme judge belonged to the chief *taisha* (*iki noyod*). The state unity of the Kalmyk Khanate was based on the sovereignty and vassalage system. The entire state structure was based on the feudal hierarchy system. *Ulus* rulers (*olon ami noyod*—junior princes) were vassals of the chief *taisha* and his close relatives. There were four noble officials (*tushimats*—rulers), who were rendering their services to the chief *taisha* on a permanent basis and were rather like his administration. Moreover, the chief *taisha* had a standing consultative organ (similar to the *Boyar Duma*)—a council consisting of junior princes and *baga noyods* (*tabunangs*—*taisha*'s sons-in-law and brothers-in-law as well as other close relatives) with a rather stable membership. Decisions taken by the consultative organ would come into force only when approved by the chief *taisha*, that is, the organ's work could be described by the well-known formula—"the sire ordered and the *boyars* executed." In this respect, the chief *taisha* served as legislative authority.

The chief *taisha*'s administration included a *dargah*, who was not only an assistant *tushimat* (similar to a *dumnyi diak*) and a farm manager of the chief *taisha*, but also a law-enforcement officer. The *dargah* had an assistant farm manager (*demchi*—a *diak*), who, in his turn, had a *shulang* (a *diak* assistant). Thereby, the political system of the Kalmyk Khanate was characterized by three major functions: legislative, executive, and judicial.

The Kalmyk Khanate had its army (*tsereg*, *daisung*) comprising adult men and usually headed by the chief *taisha* and his *ulus* rulers (*tyumen* commanders). The chief *taisha* could appoint one of loyal officials as the chief commander. Such categories of battle units as *khoshun* (division headed by *khoshuchi*), *zun* (century headed by the *zaisang*) as well as "forties," "twenties," and "tens" confirm that the army had a good organizational structure. Large-scale units had a banner-bearer (*tugchin*), a

trumpeter (*burechin*—these were honorary military positions), an orderly (*elchi*), etc.¹⁴ This can confirm that the Kalmyk Khanate as a state had both internal (ensuring the dominant position of certain social groups, property protection, distribution of grazing lands, etc.) and external functions (Khanate defense, foreign relations, etc.).

As for the administrative functions, the Kalmyk Khanate included *uluses* that consisted of *aimaks* (they probably used to be referred to as *otoks*). Each *aimak* comprised several *khotons* or closely related family groups who were roaming and managing their economies together.

Taishas (princes) were at the head of each *ulus* as succession owners and military leaders. *Taishas* had officials (*nutuk otokin tushimat*) at their disposal. Officials were regularly referred to as *dargah* or *demchi* (assistant chief). *Aimak* administration consisted of a *site-zaisang* (senior *zaisang*) and his *demchi* (assistant), who acted as the elder of 40 tilt carts (families) at the same time. The *shulen-ga* (elder of 20 tilt carts) acted as his assistant. In his turn, he had a subordinate as well—*arvanakh* (elder of ten tilt carts). The *aimak* administrative machinery also included a tax authority with its head (*albachy-zaisang*) and tax collectors (*albachy*).

Thus, the Kalmyk society emerged as a result of the state formation process. It was based on the pyramid principle: the sovereign monarch (khan) on the top, the circle of his immediate fellows a bit lower, and then officials of a lower rank. Common people being the object of exploitation laid the basis of the pyramid. By the state organization, the Kalmyk Khanate was a unitary state monarchy with an autocratic political regime.

The process of the Kalmyk Khanate's formation was over when the Great Code of the Nomads, 1640 (*Iki Tsaadzhin Bichig*), a written monument of the Mongol–Oirat law, was passed. It was approved at the conference of the khans and princes of the Khalkha, Kukunor, Dzungaria, and Volga region (Ho Urluk and his sons) on September 5, 1640. Supreme Lamaist clergy officials took part in the congress (*chulgan*) as well. The law, which became the code for the Volga Kalmyks as well, played an important part in the process of unifying Kalmyk *uluses*, forming the Kalmyk Khanate, and its consolidation and development in the succeeding years.

By passing the common code, legislators had the following objectives: to resolve internal conflicts among feudal lords and to prevent their internecine fighting, to combine forces against foreign threats by forming a political–military alliance, and to strengthen the feudal system. That is why the Code covered various areas of law including criminal, civil, religious, military and procedural law (procedures of steppe courts). The Code addressed administration management issues to a certain degree as

well (rights and obligations of *noyons* [religion messengers], authorities of officials in charge of tax collection [*albans*] and officials supervising over the fulfillment of duties, etc.).

The Code paid much attention to the regulation of matrimonial relations. The matrimonial law reflected the patriarchal way of life with such fundamental signs as obedience to the senior and degraded position of women. The patriarchal features of Kalmyks' life became more evident when a new family was going to emerge: it was not the young people that were going to get married but their parents who were the key figures in the marriage. The marriage age was 14 years. However, social inequality prevailed in matrimonial relations. Only people belonging to the same class could become relatives through marriage.

According to the Code, sons of a deceased parent had priority when inheriting his property. Daughters (if any) did not get anything. Most probably, the heirs had only one obligation related to their sisters: to marry them off. The estate including cattle, ground, and other property was divided, apparently, among sons in equal parts.

Lawmakers took care of the problem of the population reproduction as well. The Code said, "four tilt carts out of 40 must marry their sons off every year."¹⁵ One can see that reproduction was to be carried out on a regular basis.

The criminal law paid the greatest attention to cattle property protection because it was the basis of the nomad economy, key source of nomads' life and well-being, transportation means (horses, camels, and bulls), object of barter trade, etc. Since cattle was one of the objects in feudal civil strives, theft, destruction, etc., the Code stipulated various kinds of material punishment, for example, the fine "for (stolen) cattle: eight nonaries [one nonary comprised nine heads of various types of cattle—*K.M.*], and one nonary to the witness."¹⁶ At the same time, the number of nonaries depended on the kind of cattle stolen, as well as social rank of the complainant and respondent.

Intended murders were considered to be the most serious personal crimes. Blows with the hand or weapon, as well as slander and insult, were less serious personal crimes. The Code provided serious punishments for willful roaming from the owner, as well as failing to obey the orders issued by *taishas*, *noyons*, and officials. The Code said: if "any prince, *tabunangs*, or official of any rank belonging to junior princes and *tabunangs*, *demchis*, or *shulang*s beats somebody to enforce the sovereign's instructions, orders or laws, it is not a guilt; should somebody die (as a result) of the beating, it is not a guilt either." At the same time, there

was an attempt to protect common people against the officials' tyranny: "if the officials beat somebody only due to their arrogance, they must pay a fine in the amount of one nonary for serious beating, five (animals) for medium beating, and one horse for minor beating."¹⁷

Special attention was paid to crimes committed against the state. The lawmakers included the following crimes: breaching administration procedures, attacking frontier settlements, untimely notifying about the enemy approach, failing to render assistance to princes in battle, failing to take measures to recapture the cattle and *uluses'* property from the enemy, attempting on the honor and dignity of princes, feudal lords of other classes, officials of other ranks, etc.

The Great Code had a number of articles devoted to the institution of military law that were aimed at strengthening the combat effectiveness of the army and improving the behavior of soldiers. A soldier's failure to appear at the place where soldiers were to get together to set off for the campaign was a crime inflicting the death penalty. The rest of crimes and offences of soldiers were qualified as less grave in the Code and required less serious punishment. However, the type and degree of soldiers' punishment depended on the military and civil offices they held and their social positions. Those soldiers that were feudal lords and officials would be subjected to a forfeit of a certain number of cattle and serfs, as well as to moral punishment ("wear women's sleeveless waistcoat for some time"). A soldier of a common origin who left the battlefield was to "pay a fine in the amount of one quiver and one horse." Panic-mongers were subjected to a humiliating punishment ("to put a women's sleeveless waistcoat on him"). At the same time, the Code stipulated means for encouraging and rewarding soldiers who showed heroism and courage.¹⁸

It is important to emphasize that under conditions of intensified external threat, and taking into consideration the nomadic social system of Mongols and Oirats, the legislators prioritized military law which related to all layers of population in the khanates and princedoms. All three types of crimes involving capital punishment, which were defined in the Great Code, were military ones.

The 1640 code of laws acknowledged Lamaism as the official state religion of all involved khanates and princedoms. Therefore, the lawmakers thought that crimes committed against religion ranked third after crimes against state and military crimes. The articles devoted to Lamaist clergy and church were aimed at protecting the honor and dignity of clergymen ("those who offend a *chos-rje* by words must pay the fine in the amount of nine nonaries") and at protecting their property ("those who take any

wagons from lamas and *bandhya* must pay the fine in the amount of one cow"). At the same time, the lawmakers took care of strengthening the order in *khuruls* and complying with vows made by clergymen.¹⁹ Thus, the provisions of the Great Code concerning religion were aimed at protecting the ideological basis of Mongol and Oirat feudal states.

The adoption of the Great Code in 1640 became an important legal basis for the formation and development of the Kalmyk statehood in the form of a khanate because it regulated not only separate groups of public relations but also all aspects of the social and political life of the Kalmyk society at that time.

The form and mechanism for adopting the Great Code confirm its relatively democratic nature (as it was adopted by a council with the participation of khans, senior, medium, and junior *taishas*, as well as representatives of supreme clergy) if we take into account that every member of the *chulgan* representing the temporal power was a senior official possessing certain legislative authorities.

Given their nomadic way of life and geographical conditions, cattle breeding was always a major historical economic activity of Kalmyks. Animals were always pasturing. All the economy was based on extensive forms. According to early historic sources, the most widespread animals in the nomadic life conditions were sheep, goats, and bovine cattle, which served as sources of food and raw materials for manufacturing clothes, footwear, tents, harnesses, saddles, etc. Horses and camels were also used more often as cartage and means of transportation for military purposes.

Thus, the nomads' life and welfare depended on the availability and number of livestock. Historic sources fail to provide us with any exact data on the amount of cattle owned by Kalmyks before the early 19th century. However, there are certain data enabling us to conclude that as early as the beginning of the 18th century the amount of cattle was a criterion showing the nomad's social status. This is obvious from articles from the Great Code of the Nomads (*Iki Tsaadzhin Bichig*), which stipulated different punishments in the form of fines in cattle for the same crime: while a ruling prince was to pay one hundred camels and one thousand horses as the fine in addition to one hundred coats of mail and fifty households (Article 14), a commoner was to pay only one horse and a quiver in the same case (Articles 14–17). These data confirm that cattle were a source of both life and wealth of nomads, which defined their material and social status.

Depending on natural conditions of camps, the Kalmyk economy comprised hunting for wild animals such as antelopes, wolves, foxes, corsac

foxes, beavers, ermines, wolverines, etc., as well as fishing. The processing of agricultural raw materials for their own needs and for sale, handicrafts, especially those related to the production of weapons, household goods, clothes, labor tools, etc. were also of primary importance. Kalmyks also practiced such crafts as smithery, saddlery, felting, shoemaking, tailoring, etc.

Commerce and establishment of trade relations with the neighbors played an important part in developing mutual relations with Russia, as well as providing the vital functions and forming the economy of nomads. The key goods that Kalmyks delivered to the markets in Russian cities were cattle, livestock products, and raw materials (leather, wool, etc.). They established trade contacts with large cities, and the tsarist administration generally did not prevent the development of mutually beneficial trade relations with Kalmyks since horses, sheep, felt, wool, leather, etc. were supplied to the Russian market. In their turn, Kalmyks were buying cloths, fabric, crockery, metalware, etc. on the markets.

The issue of trade relations was of much importance and was the subject of agreements and contracts made between administrations of Siberian, Ural, and Volga towns and Kalmyk *taishas* on a permanent basis. Almost all *shert* instruments we know about regulated commercial issues without fail and in much detail because trade contributed to the development of both economic relations between Kalmyks and other peoples and between Russian and Kalmyk authorities.

The social and material status of particular layers of the Kalmyk population, development of trade relations, permanent urgent problem of pastures, and Kalmyks' fighting capacity (up to 36 thousand horsemen accompanied by a caravan comprising up to 2.5 thousand camels²⁰ were prepared to engage in a battle in case of need) show that Kalmyks were able to defend themselves and their households at any time, defeating attacks on the part of numerous enemies. This enables us to conclude that in the 16–17th centuries Kalmyks had sufficient cattle, which was the main source of food, clothes, footwear, and tents for them, as well as defined their military status and fighting efficiency. We have to put it this way because there are no official statistics for the period before the early 19th century.

Numerous written historic and historiographic sources confirm that Kalmyks had rich traditions in both their own and translated literature at the time when they migrated into the Russian territory. Before a new alphabet of Zaya-Pandita was introduced (middle of the 17th century), Kalmyks had already used the old Mongol alphabet for many centuries. The

archives and libraries in Russia and other countries still have unique manuscripts confirming and telling us about the rich Kalmyk culture.

A new stage of the Kalmyk history was related to the conversion to Lamaism in the late 17th century, as well as to activities of an outstanding scientist and enlightener of the time, Zaya-Pandita. As mentioned above, Lamaism, according to the 1640 Great Code of the Nomads, was the dominant ideology among Oirats. Later it was consolidated in a supplementary legislation compiled during the rule of Kalmyk Khan Donduk-Dashi from 1741 to 1753.²¹

Lamaism showed tolerance for Oirats' ancient beliefs and ceremonies, in particular, for folk holidays. Propagation of Lamaism contributed to the appearance and development of architecture, sculpture, painting, literature, and medicine in Oirats, as well as emergence of intelligentsia with clerical education. Religion played an important part in the moral education of people.

Translated literature became prevalent in the period. A lot of religious, historical, and fiction works were translated into Kalmyk. Zaya-Pandita alone translated at least 170 works from Tibetan: small treatises and voluminous books, intricate philosophy works, collections of legends comprehensible for anyone, and other texts.²² *Story of Choidzhid-dagini* propagating and popularizing Buddhist morals and law was among the works. Translations of Indian large systematized collected works—*Translated Directions (Gandzhur)* and *Translated Treatises (Dandzhur)*—were known well in Kalmykia. Speaking about canonical works as a part of *Gandzhur*, *Uligeriyn dalai* (Buddha's debates with his disciples about morals and philosophy) became popular.

Along with original and translated literature, verbal folk art rooted in the original national culture was widespread among Oirats (Kalmyks). The art is notable for its wealth and multiple genres featured in fairy tales, sayings, proverbs, songs, riddles, legends, and epic sagas. Undoubtedly, the Kalmyk heroic epos *Dzhangar* composed long before the Lamaism era, dating back to the pre-Genghis epoch, forms a part of world literature. As a matter of fact, the heroic epos is an entire and well-composed work that belongs among masterpieces of world folklore and reflects the national heroic spirit, traditions, spiritual heritage, and great culture. The epos inspired Oirats; it was a part of their lives, their spiritual fare, and historical, artistic, political, and philosophical source. Peace and well-being come to the Bumba country as a result of the heroic deeds of Dzhangar's characters, and people live peacefully and happily in the promised land without poverty and orphanage; they are immortal.

Kalmyk verbal folk art provides valuable information about ways of their life, household, work, traditions, and customs. It poetizes courage, kindness, generosity of a human soul, honesty and love of people and motherland, and blames human vices. All this speaks about the high spiritual and moral level of the nation's culture.

Folk art, in particular, songs, music, dances, and applied art, as well as such sport games as *alchiki*,ⁱ chess, wrestling, horse races, etc. were prevalent among Kalmyks. After the adoption of Lamaism, painting—mainly religious painting in *khuruls*ⁱⁱ—started to develop.

Knowledge of the nation in various fields was diverse and deep. Monks in monasteries held philosophic debates about laws of the universe operating with very complicated ideas. Kalmyks were educated in well-known Buddhist centers of Tibet, where they learnt about recent developments in the science of India and China. They translated scientific works into the Kalmyk language.

Kalmyks of the period in question had general geographic ideas of the globe. They knew about the existence of seas, oceans, other nations and countries. Nomads possessed rich practical knowledge of botany and knew plants applied for various purposes well. Cattle-breeders knew animal anatomy and veterinary very well, and the knowledge helped them breed and protect their cattle.

Kalmyks developed a whole system for measuring weight, time, and area. They could count using the names of numbers they invented. The ancient system of national measurements was in practical use among the Kalmyk people for quite a long time, up to 1930. Kalmyks named some stars, constellations, planets, and the Sun in their own way. The Sun was *Narn*, the Moon *Sar*, Mars *Mingmer*, Mercury *Ulyumdahi*, Jupiter *Purvyä*, Venus *Basang*, Saturn *Bembya*, and the North Star was known as *Altä Gasn*.

The Kalmyk calendar was based on a 12-year cycle according to which each year had a name of an animal. Serial and cyclic dates of the calendar comprised 60-year periods, five cycles in each period. Years included 12 lunar months that were referred to by the same names of animals as the years in the 12-year cycle. Days were divided into dawn, middle morning, midday, afternoon, sunset, dusk (light, medium, and dark), midnight, and from midnight to dawn.²³

ⁱ Translator's note: *alchiki*—a dice game.

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *khurul*—a Lamaist church.

Thus, in spite of hard conditions of their roaming way of life (permanent danger of enemies' attacks, long-term migrations, etc.), Kalmyks created and preserved an original spiritual culture and made their contribution to the world culture.

A well-composed administrative system based on centralization and undivided authority principles was formed in the Kalmyk Khanate and the entire territory of Russia by the late 17th–early 18th centuries. N.N. Palmov characterized the processes as follows: "Patriarchal relations underwent major changes during the period. The khan concentrated all power over the nation in his hands; *taishas* were to obey him always and in every respect."²⁴ An agreement denominating Ayuka Khan as the sole ruler ("promised to order all *taishas*," "issue the *ukase*," etc.) having supreme administrative, legislative, military, and judicial authorities, who could regulate problems related to internal affairs and management, troops recruitment and pasture ground distribution and usage, can also confirm this. *Noyons*—*ulus* owners (*taishas*)—were in charge of issues of economic nature. However, the khan's power and administrative centralization were intensifying owing to the need to provide collective security for the *uluses* and to ensure territories for pasture grounds that would be vast enough. At the same time, the struggle for power was going on. *Taishas* started showing separatism tendencies (leaving the Khanate but under the tsar's patronage). This resulted in the impairment of the Kalmyk Khanate. The tsarist administration took into account and actively used these circumstances in its own interests. On the one hand, the tsarist administration assisted Ayuka in strengthening his power; on the other hand, however, it allowed *taishas* to pursue the policy that was quite independent from Ayuka (but under its own control and direction).

In connection with considerable administrative centralization and extension of the Kalmyk ruler's jurisdiction and functions, the structure and staff of the khan's administrative services became slightly more complicated in the early 18th century and turned into what could be seen as a nationwide authority. Though the central administrative staff was still under the khan's supervision, the court and state authorities were reasonably separated.

The khan himself was at the head of the executive and supreme legal body that was later named *Zargo*. *Darkhan*, who was his assistant, deputy or headquarters head, had judiciary authorities as well. Privy councilors (*dayan dutono*) also acting as judges, diplomatic officials in charge of special missions (*elchi*) and penmen (*bichachi*) belonged to senior officials.

At the same time, an independent court department with its heads—chief of the khan's administration and economy (*dargah*) and his deputy (*demchi*) in charge of the tax service—was segregated from the Kalmyk Khanate's central administrative staff. The khan's personal bodyguard service headed by its chief (*shidar kya*) and guards of different levels (*oldar kya* and *olzyata kya*), as well as the khan's wife's personal bodyguard service belonged to a separate department.

Administration of *uluses* (headed by the *noyon*) and Aimaks (headed by the *zaisang*) remained practically the same, with an exception of the position of *bodokchei* (an official in charge of disputable legal cases related to customs) introduced in *uluses*.²⁵

The structure of the feudal class in Kalmyk society became more distinct in the early 18th century: khan, *noyon* (*taisha*), and Lamaist clergy belonged to large-scale feudal lords; *zaisangs* (central administrative staff officials serving to the khan and *noyons*) belonged to the lowest class. In addition to them, the social structure of the Kalmyk Khanate's population preserved a separate group (*darkhans* or *erketens*), whose formation began a bit earlier, as it has already been mentioned above, and was a special layer in the feudal class. *Darkhans*, or *erketens*, were not only in a favored position (they, as well as members of their families or other relatives, were exempted from all duties and taxes), but also had an opportunity to climb the hierarchy of ranks up to the top offices.

Beginning from the second half of the 17th century, the Lamaist church (*khurul*) headed by the *khambo-lama* (chief lama), who was appointed from Tibet, was an important element of the political system in Kalmyk society. The Lamaist church was an organized and harmonious system. The *khambo-lama* was at the head of its administration located in the main *khurul* (*datsan*), secretary (*donir*), and collegial body—administrative council comprising the *datsan*'s senior priest, administrator, (*shiregetu*) and chief of the council in one, head of the *datsan*'s office (*chos-rje*), two assistants to him (*shaldzaba* and *dzasak*), and Dala's head of the curriculum department (*nansu*)—were accredited to the *khambo-lama*.²⁶

Gelyungs, *dge-tshuls*, and *mandzhiks* (pupils) were the clergymen in *khuruls*. Lamaist clergy was exempted from taxes, military service, and other duties.

The administrative staff of *khuruls* consisted of the following clergy officials: (1) senior priest in *khuruls*—*bagshi*; (2) official in charge of public worship in *khuruls*—*chos-rje* (one of *gelyungs* served in this capacity); (3) official in charge of the order during public worships—senior and

junior *gebkois*; (4) *gebkoi* assistant—*geik*; (5) officials in charge of prayer reading—senior, junior, and free *gunzuds* (prayer readers); (6) official in charge of cult articles—*gonir*; (7) treasurer and household manager—*sherva*; (8) *sherva* assistant—*zama*; (9) official in charge of delivering food and holy water during public worships—*tsarvuchi*; (10) band of musicians (as a rule, they were *mandzhiks*).

Moreover, the *amchi* (doctor in charge of treating patients, making drugs, and instructing *mandzhiks* in the field of Tibetan medicine), *zurk-hachi* (astrologer), and *zurachi* (painter) were also a part of the *khurul* staff.²⁷

Peasantry fully depended on their feudal lords in the Kalmyk Khanate. The major part of dependable population belonged to the class of taxpayers (*albat*), who could be compared to state peasants to a certain degree. The class of *abganers* and *kotchiners* can be compared to patrimony peasants; *shabis* were similar to church peasants (belonging to the Lamaist clergy). There were other categories of people that were in feudal dependency as well. *Tsoohors* living in the feudal lord's estate and exploited by him played an important role among them.

Bondmen and slaves (*kitad* and *muhul*) belonged to another category of people in feudal dependency. According to the law, they were not considered legal persons (Article 99 of the 1640 Great Code of the Nomads said that "female slave witnesses shall not be taken into consideration").

The structure of the Russian Army had a noticeable impact on the organizational structure of the Kalmyk Army in the early 18th century. Divisions (*khoshuns*) with *ulus* rulers (*khoshuchis*) at the head were large-scale units in the Kalmyk Army. *Zaisangs* commanded regiments (*zalans*) comprising squadrons (*suluns*).

The key principles of Russian–Kalmyk relations were especially evident through the key line of their cooperation—military cooperation. According to K.P. Shovunov, there was an agreement between Russians and Kalmyks, according to which the tsar sent out a decree saying that it was necessary to deploy Kalmyk military forces to a theatre of military operations, and it was up to the khan and *ulus* rulers to decide whether it was possible to provide the force in question and when.

If the Kalmyks were ready to provide military forces, the tsarist administration would send its high-ranking military representatives to the khan for carrying out negotiations about the specific terms of the troops' recruitment and their number.

Having examined and agreed upon all details with representatives of central authorities, the khan would issue an order to *ulus noyons* to carry

out the recruitment. The order provided for the location of assembly and the marching route.

The typical features and nature of such cooperation disclose the essence of the relations based on the suzerainty principles. However, in this case the vassal (khan) had certain immunity in his territory. *Ulus* rulers belonged to the khan's vassals.

When Kalmyks finally became a part of Russia and formed their state, they became actively engaged in protecting the interests and safety of the Russian state from the very beginning. The Russian–Polish war was ending at the time, but negotiations between the conflicting parties were delayed a number of times (the war lasted from July 1664 to early January 1667). The military operations between Poland, the Crimean Khanate, and Right-Bank Ukraine, on the one hand, and Russia and Left-Bank Ukraine, as the other party, were conducted until the Truce of Andrusovo was signed (on January 30, 1667). At the final stage of the conflict special significance was attached to the Kalmyk cavalry, and both opposing forces appreciated its potential. During the negotiations held in 1664 the Polish delegation attempted to blackmail the Russian one threatening that Kalmyks and Astrakhan Tatars would join the Crimean khan, and “you should just imagine: when we join them, you will go hard with it.”²⁸

Meanwhile, a 17-thousand Kalmyk unit accompanied by the *dumnyi* nobleman Ya. Khitrov came to the left-bank part of Ukraine to lend a hand to the Russian army and Zaporozhye Cossacks in early May 1665. The commandment sent a part of Kalmyk horsemen, namely 10 thousand people, to attack the Polish army near the town of Belaya Tserkov where they came right out of the blue for the Poles. In his official report to Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich of May 25, 1665, *hetman* I. Bryukhovetsky said that Kalmyks “stroke the Poles so much that they hardly had any time to flee to Belaya Tserkov with their camp,” as for Kalmyks, they got rich trophies and “got back luckily.” Another group comprising seven thousand horsemen “came to Perekop” and together with “Zaporozhye Cossacks, attacked Crimean troops, set a lot of (Russian and Ukrainian) captives free and got abundant trophies.”²⁹ So it seems logical that Crimean Khan Mohammed-Girey said more than once that “Crimean people are afraid of Kalmyks,” and that he could not let his army leave his territory since “there is a threat of the invasion of Kalmyks and Zaporozhye Cossacks to the Crimea.”³⁰

Active military actions of the Kalmyk cavalry became one of the weighty arguments the Russian deputation used in its negotiations with the Poles regarding their alliance in view of the threat of Turkish and

Crimean invasion to Russia after the Truce of Andrusovo. Afanasiy Lavrentiyevich Ordin-Nashchokin, the head of the Posolsky *Prikaz*, told the Poles that “the troops of His Majesty... as well as Kalmyks are ready to attack the strangers in October 1667.”³¹

In the course of the October negotiations, chief of the Russian Foreign Affairs Department A.L. Ordin-Nashchokin promised the Poles that “Kalmyks and Don Cossacks are going to attack the Crimea to distract the enemy’s forces.”³² As a matter of fact, joint forces of Zaporozhye and Don Cossacks as well as Kalmyks inflicted a number of serious blows to the Crimean army. As many as three thousand Tatars were killed and five hundred captured as a result of one attack only. “And after the third campaign they attacked the town of Bakhchisaray.”³³

By that time, significant political changes have taken place in the Kalmyk Khanate, which opened a new page in its history. The ruler of the Kalmyk Khanate, Monchak, who founded the feudal state as a part of Russia jointly with his father Daichin, died in 1669. His senior son, 27-year-old Ayuka, inherited the throne based on his father’s oral testament. He started reigning in rather complicated conditions both in Russia (aggressive politics of Turkey and Crimea, betrayal of *hetman* Doroshenko in the Right-Bank Ukraine and riots under the leadership of Stepan Razin) and inside the Khanate (separatist actions on the part of two *taishas*—Dugar and Bok, fight with the Khoshout ruler Ablai who came to the Yaik river from Dzungaria, as well as fight for resuming control over Yedisán, Yembuluk, and Nogai *murzas*).

In a rather short period of time (1669–1671), young Kalmyk ruler Ayuka managed to defeat his rivals (he defeated *taisha* Dugar and his son Tseren, captivated them, and sent them to Astrakhan, as well as defeated and captivated *taisha* Ablai), to suppress separatist trends, to resume control over these *murzas*, and to strengthen the Khanate. As a result, the *uluses* that belonged to Kalmyk *taishas* Dugar and his son Tseren, and Ablai, were appended to the Kalmyk Khanate; Daichin’s *uluses* as well as *uluses* of Ayuka’s grandfather, Kundelen-Ubashi, who had been seized by Ablai, were won back. Moreover, one thousand families from Dzungaria that used to belong to Ayuka’s full sister Dorzhi-Rabdan, whose husband, khan Ochirtu-Tsetsen, the ruler of Dzungarian Khoshouts, was killed there, joined the Kalmyk Khanate in 1671.³⁴ However, a number of *uluses* belonging to Torgout ruling princes Dugar and Bok left the Khanate and migrated to the Don river and Sea of Azov in 1669–1670. It is necessary to mention here that the Bok’s *ulus* remained a part of the Don army and founded a Cossack settlement of Kalmyks upon Don.³⁵

When Ayuka's position strengthened in Kalmykia and the Mongol-speaking countries recognized him, the tsarist administration decided to secure his status of the Khanate's ruler by another *shert* instrument. On the tsarist administration's initiative (brought in by the Posolsky and Kalmyk *Prikaz* and approved by the *Boyar Duma*), the ceremony for giving the *shert* instrument by *taisha* Ayuka to Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich in front of high-ranking state officials (including one of the key state officials—*voevoda* and *boyar*, Prince Yakov Nikitich Odoyevsky, as well as *stolnik*ⁱⁱⁱ and Prince Ivan Mikhailovich Korkodinov, Colonel Vasiliy Lavrentiyevich Pushechnikov, and *diak* Pyotr Samoilov) took place on the right bank of the Volga river, in the vicinity of Astrakhan, near the Solyanaya river on February 27, 1673.

This was the first *shert* instrument taken by a Kalmyk ruler after Monchak's *shert* of December 9, 1661. It is important to note that the *shert* instrument of February 27 was neither a contractual, nor a mandatory, or a new document. It merely confirmed and approved of the *sherts* taken by *taishas* Daichin and Monchak before. Another one of its specific features was that *taisha* Ayuka in the presence of his cousins Nazar Mamut and Melyush took his personal oath to Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich on behalf of the entire Kalmyk people, as well as on behalf of his brothers, ruling princes, and Nogai, Yedisan, Yembuluk, Malibash, and Kemchin *murzas* to be "under control and obey the tsar eternally" as well as his grandfather Daichin and father Monchak. However, the document put it clearly that "I, Ayuka, as well as my grandfather *taisha* Daichin and my father *taisha* Monchak obeyed orders of Your Majesty... and were fighting with Your Majesty's enemies according to our *sherts* and on a contractual basis,"³⁶ that is, in spite of the allegiance, mutual relations between Russia and Kalmykia were built on a voluntary and contractual basis. That is why one can say that, according to the new *shert* instrument, the status of Kalmykia remained the same. Though it remained "under control and had to obey the tsar eternally," the tsarist administration did not interfere with any internal affairs of the Khanate. Based on mutual agreement, their relations were maintained through "messengers by His Majesty's orders" and Ayuka's "envoys" to the tsar, *boyars*, and *voevodas*.

According to the *shert* instrument, the military field of their cooperation was the key one: "His Majesty will order to wage war against... Crimea and Crimean *uluses* and against those who disobey His Majesty, and

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *stolnik* —the highest general sub-*Duma* rank of military and court servitors in Muscovy (literally meaning "table-attendant").

to do so without any fail.” There were two possible options for their campaigns: “alone or together with His Majesty’s soldiers.”³⁷ The instrument demonstrates that the tsarist administration kept pressing for the forms of relations that would ensure the execution of the tsar’s orders by his subjects. Special attention was paid to rule out any relations between Kalmykia and other states. By mutual consent between Russians and Kalmyks in the *shert* instrument of February 27, the latter undertook “not to have any relations or contacts with the Turkish Sultan, Kyzylbash Shah, Crimean Khan, Azov Bey, Temryuk, Tabans, Besleney, Kumyks, or any other foreign countries, and not to render any assistance to them either in the form of weapons, horses, or soldiers.”³⁸

A remarkable feature of the *shert* instrument as of February 27, 1673 that distinguishes this document from the previous *sherts* was its formal compliance with all requirements set for legal instruments. The draft instrument was prepared in the Kalmyk *Prikaz*, as usual, and coordinated with the Posolsky *Prikaz* (*boyar*, Prince Artamon Sergeyevich Matveyev was the head of the *Prikaz*); then it was brought in to the *Boyar Duma* for hearings. After the second hearing at the *Boyar Duma*, this time, probably, with the participation of Tsar Alexey Mikhailovich, the draft was approved and recommended for signing.

Representatives of both of the parties signed the *shert* instrument. Ayuka’s personal seal, as well as minor state seal of the Posolsky *Prikaz* intended for charters, were affixed to the document.³⁹ The *shert* instrument had the same legal force as a law since it was prepared in compliance with all official requirements and requisites listed in the set form (name, authors, title, table of contents, signatures, and seals). Therefore, the instrument was published in the first volume of the *Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire* under Number 540 in 1830 as a legally effective contractual document.

According to his obligations, Ayuka kept waging war against Turks and Crimean Tatars. Ivan Serko, the chief of the joint unit comprising Don and Zaporozhye Cossacks and Kalmyks, informed the Belgorod *voevodas* G.G. Romodanovskiy in July 1670: “Kalmyks approached Perekop, entered the Crimean Peninsula and caused much trouble to our enemies.” Joint actions of Kalmyks and Cossacks were most successful during the summer campaigns of 1672 and 1673. Kalmyks and Cossacks “killed a great number of Turks” in the vicinity of Azov and “captured some 400 people and nine thousand cattle” in August 1672. In the summer of 1673 a unit of five thousand Kalmyk soldiers participated in fighting “the Turkish army and Crimea” together with Cossacks. In addition to joint campaigns

with Cossacks, Kalmyks held independent campaigns upon the tsar administration's instructions as well. Ayuka sent a large unit of Kalmyk soldiers "to wage war against the Crimea Khanate, ...and Kalmyks were fighting with Malibash soldiers and against their *uluses*."⁴⁰

It is well known that the process of strengthening the Russian state as a united centralized power was going on in the second half of the 17th century. As far as the form of government was concerned, there was a tendency of transition from the monarchy of representatives of nobility to an absolute monarchy. Under this kind of circumstances, some changes were gradually introduced into the legal status of ethnic regions of Russia and into their mutual relations. While the agreements made previously stipulated, specified, secured, and confirmed the fact of taking the Russian allegiance by Kalmyks, the *shert* instrument of 1677 introduced new elements into the legal status of Kalmykia as a part of Russia. It is not accidental that the Russian administration demanded from the Kalmyk ruler to take a new *shert* in 1677 despite the fact that the previous one had been taken only three or four years earlier.

The motives behind the execution of the new document was the enthronement of Fyodor Alexeyevich in January 1676 and the arrival in Kalmykia of five new *uluses* led by their *taishas* Doyan, Seren, Dol, Baush, and Sharapov. Besides, serious popular uprisings in the Volga region and non-compliance with several clauses of the 1673 *shert* instrument by some ruling princes also constituted factors that accelerated the new *shert*-taking. In addition, under the conditions of hostilities between Russia and Turkey over Ukraine and another war that eventually broke out between the two states, Russia apparently wanted to secure the previous contractual obligations of Kalmyks to take part in the war and not to enter into any relations with Turkey and Crimea.

However, the main reason was that new aspects of the legal status of Kalmykia and its population had to be legitimized. The *shert* taken by *taishas* Ayuka and Zamsa to Tsar Fyodor Alexeyevich in front of Astrakhan *voevoda* and Okolnichy Prince K.O. Shcherbatov, *dumnyi* nobleman K.O. Khlopov, and *diaks* S. Rumyantsev and A. Simonov on January 15, 1677 made great changes in both relations between the parties and the status of Kalmykia. Under the legal instrument, Kalmyk *taishas* confirmed their previous obligations (first of all, military obligations) and took an oath "to be under His Majesty's high control for ever and ever, eternally, and without fail" personally and for the first time in history. According to these regulations, the *shert* said that Kalmykia was going to incur "implicit obedience to the Russian state," the Kalmyk

ruler was to “receive written orders standing, having taken his cap off and showing great respect” and that the Kalmyk ruler was to “perform all orders issued by His Majesty.”⁴¹

It should be noted that the *shert* instrument of 1677 substantially restricted Kalmykia's foreign contacts by introducing control over its foreign relations. According to the document, the ruler of Kalmykia had to report to the Russian tsar about all ambassadors, envoys, or messengers coming to Kalmykia from any country, as well as about the contents of all letters and messages “without concealing anything... and forward the incoming letters to His Majesty,” as well as “let the ambassadors go and register their letters in compliance with His Majesty's orders.”⁴² Analyzing the above clauses, one can quite agree with N.N. Palmov's opinion that “the tsar administration attempted to reduce the status of Kalmykia to that of ‘its direct subordinate’ as far as the Kalmyk foreign relations in the second half of the 17th century were concerned.”⁴³

Judging by its content, the document was of both obligatory and contractual nature: “According to this new agreement, now we have agreed and stipulated as follows: ...to live with His Majesty's people in peace and agreement” and “trade with Russians and foreigners in the vicinity of Astrakhan, across His Majesty's former *ulus*, without any quarrels or strives.”⁴⁴ Moreover, both parties to this official instrument guaranteed for the first time that they would not prevent Kalmyks from becoming Orthodox Christians if Kalmyks wanted to do so.⁴⁵ If we examine this fact from the point of view of historicism, we should say that this was not merely a manifestation of a policy that the tsarist authorities pursued in the 1660s and 1670s. Apart from it, a new national and social environment began involving Kalmyks in establishing economic, trade, and everyday relations with Russians during that time. Kalmyks' isolation was beginning to vanish. They started feeling equal to other Russian peoples, in particular where it came to choosing their religion. It is possible that the conversion of Kalmyks to Orthodoxy enabled them to make their business relations with Russian people much easier.⁴⁶

In the course of the 1677–1681 Russo-Turkish War the Turkish army comprising 100 thousand soldiers (including 40 thousand Tatars) under the command of Ibrahim Pasha invaded Right-Bank Ukraine in June 1677 and besieged the town of Chigirin, the former headquarters of *hetman* P.D. Doroshenko in early August again. A three-thousand unit of Kalmyks participated in the Chigirin battle along with the Cossacks. Kalmyk units comprising five thousand soldiers were fighting in the army under the command of Prince K.M. Cherkasskiy at the Chigirin Heights the next

year. A great number of Kalmyk horsemen were taking an active part in the battles in 1678–1680.⁴⁷

A 13-year armistice was concluded with Poland in 1678; it was to come into effect in 1680. The Bakhchisaray Peace Treaty was signed with Turkey and the Crimean Khanate in January 1681; it provided for an armistice for 20 years. At the same time, the fight with the Kirghiz was going on in Southern Siberia.

At the same time, despite the mutual obligations on the part of *taisha* Ayuka and the tsarist administration, both parties violated some clauses of the *shert* instrument during the period. This resulted in serious misunderstandings. Thus, the tsarist administration failed to take any real steps to prevent raids of Bashkir *murzas*, in particular, during the years of their disturbances, as well as attacks of Don Cossacks against Kalmyks for a long time.⁴⁸ Yet, when the war began the tsarist administration had to start settling mutual relations between Kalmyks and Cossacks. The Astrakhan *voevoda* received two charters on this issue. The first one of February 2, 1678 instructed to persuade the Cossacks “not to quarrel with Kalmyks and not wage war against them.” Their relations were regulated soon, and Don Cossack F. Minayev reported to Moscow that Kalmyks and Don Cossacks “maintained peace between them, and any misunderstanding between them was over... and many Kalmyks started selling bulls and sheep in the Don area and exchanging them for stocks and wine.” Later he confirmed once again that they “made eternal peace” with Ayuka and other *taishas* and organized a joint campaign of a Kalmyk and Cossack unit under the command of Mazan-Batyr and Vasilii Pyatiizbensky against the Crimea.⁴⁹

However, home and foreign circumstances made the tsarist administration turn to the problems related to compliance with contractual obligations again in the early 1680s. One of the reasons was that Kalmykia started showing independence in its foreign policy (it was trying to establish close relations with the Crimean Khanate). To normalize relations with the Kalmyk Khanate, the tsarist administration took a number of steps. First of all, it instructed *voevodas* of a number of towns in the Volga and Don regions to ban Cossacks’ attacks against Kalmyks. The Posolsky *Prikaz* (headed by *dumnyi diak* Larion Ivanovich Ivanov) concentrated on managing all relations with Kalmyks. *Dumnyi diak* I.S. Gorokhov was directly engaged in regulating the Kalmyk problem. He was in Kalmyk *uluses* more than once and knew the situation in Kalmykia rather well.

That is why *taisha* Ayuka took an oath of allegiance twice within two years (in 1681, shortly before the death of Tsar Fyodor Alexeyevich, and

in 1683). Since Cossacks and Bashkirs resumed their raids when there were troubles in Moscow (strelets riots and intra-dynastic conflicts), a ceremony for confirming the terms and conditions of the previous official *shert* instrument in front of Astrakhan voevoda Matvey Stepanovich Pushkin was initiated by Ayuka and took place in March 1681. The key objective of the 1681 *shert* was to ensure compliance with the agreement by both parties and to prevent close relations between Kalmyks and the Crimean Khanate. The new instrument lacked new provisions and was not a normative document. Thus, it did not form a part of the *Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire*.

Ayuka took one more *shert* (on January 24, 1683) upon the instruction of great tsars Ivan Alexeyevich and Peter Alexeyevich during the second year of their reign in front of Astrakhan voevoda and boyar, Prince Andrey Ivanovich Golitsyn, representative of central authorities and Okolnichy Prince Nikita Ivanovich Primakov, as well as another voevoda and *dumnyi* nobleman Stepan Bogdanovich Lovchikov. Ayuka confirmed to the “senior” and “junior” tsars on his own behalf and on behalf of his brother Zams, *taisha* Seren, his brothers, children, nephews, and grandchildren that he would be “under the great Tsar’s control and authority without fail for ever and ever.”⁵⁰

It is clear from the *shert* instrument of 1683 that the adoption of this document entitled *On allegiance to the Russian Tsars, about the inviolable nature of the contractual clauses, about participation in campaigns against enemies of Russia, about non-participation in any raids against Russian towns or people, about non-maintenance of any relations with rebels, about forwarding letters and messengers from the Crimea to Moscow, and about setting Russian captives free without any custody* was motivated by the violations of the terms and conditions of the previous *shert*, on the one hand, and by enthroning of the “senior” and “junior” tsars, on the other. The new instrument mainly repeated obligations of both parties stipulated in the 1677 *shert*. At the same time, the following provision was added: Kalmyks “joined the Bashkir betrayers in attacking the Kazan and Ufa *uyezds* and also raided some Ukrainian towns, villages and settlements... Hereinafter you must not take part in such robberies anymore.”⁵¹ Moreover, the *shert* emphasized that both Ayuka’s grandfather Daichin and father Monchak “had followed all Tsar’s instructions without any fail.” For the first time harsh punishment up to a death penalty was stipulated for ringleaders of attacks against and destruction of Russian villages and towns and for those who initiated taking captives. Altogether, the tsarist administration was trying to solve all problems in

mutual relations in friendly ways in order to engage Kalmyks in joint fight against Russia's enemies and to prevent possible migration of Kalmyks beyond the territory of Russia.

Due to the tsarist administration's efforts, mutual relations among Kalmyks, Cossacks, and other peoples of the Volga region were stabilizing by that time. As subsequent events showed, Kalmyks under the patronage of Ayuka protected the southern borders of Russia, struggled against the enemies of Russia, and took an active part in all wars in the late 17th and early 18th centuries when the situation stabilized.

It is a well-known fact that Russia made several attempts to secure an outlet to the Black Sea in order to ensure safety of its southern borders in the 1680s and 1690s. The first victory of Russians over Turks was the seizure of the Azov fortress in July 1696. Kalmyk horsemen along with Don Cossacks and a Moscow regiment in the vanguard under the command of General Patrick Gordon took part in the Azov battle. Another Kalmyk unit comprising three thousand soldiers made a part of a large regiment under the command of *voevoda* and *boyar* Alexey Semyonovich Shein. Peter the First conferred top prizes on him for the campaign. To acknowledge Kalmyks' merits during the seizure of Azov, the Tsar ordered to issue "ten batches of dense silk of different colors with the size of five *arsheens*^{iv} to Ayuka and other *taishas* as well as *ulus* people from the Treasury *Prikaz*." Common Kalmyks and ordinary soldiers were given a golden kopeck each.⁵²

Though Azov was practically destroyed ("however, the Azov fortress is demolished inside and burnt down utterly"), it was still of a great strategic value. "The Transfiguration sitting with the participation of boyars to discuss affairs" decided to send three thousand families from downstream towns and "400 mounted Kalmyks" to Azov on October 20, 1696.⁵³

When the first stage of the process of the Russian southern border reinforcement was over, Peter I turned his attention to the west. He went abroad as a part of a so-called Great Embassy in March 1697. Leaving for eighteen months, he charged three of the noblest figures to manage the country: *boyar* Lev Kirillovich Naryshkin, Prince Boris Alexeyevich Golitsyn, and Prince Peter Ivanovich Prozorovsky. He officially entrusted Ayuka Khan to be in charge of guarding the southeast frontiers of the state under the command of Prince B.A. Golitsyn. The instruction issued by Peter I before his departure read, "1. In case of a campaign against Bukharians, Karakalpakians, and Kirghiz-Kaisaks, provide Ayuka Khan's

^{iv} Translator's note: *arsheens*—a Russian measure equal to 0.711 m.

artillery with the sufficient amount of cannon balls and bombs. 2. To send orders to Ufa, on the Yaik River and to the Don settlements banning Cossacks and Bashkirs from starting quarrels with Kalmyks upon the penalty of death. 3. Provide Ayuka Khan with 20 poods of gunpowder and 10 poods of plumb every year.”⁵⁴ According to the tsar's instruction, B.A. Golitsyn went to see Ayuka Khan and made an agreement with him in July 1697. According to the terms and conditions of the agreement, charters instructing “not to offend” Ayuka but, on the contrary, render assistance to him in his fight with Kuban and Crimean Tatars, were sent to *voevodas* of the Volga and Don regions.

Ayuka Khan coped with the task successfully. When Crimean Tatars resumed their raids against the boundary Russian lands in 1698, Kalmyks inflicted heavy losses on Turks and Tatars. “Pro-Russian Kalmyks” came to the rescue of the Tavan fortress garrison, “killed a great number of enemies on the spot and sent the rest of them fleeing in great panic.” “As many as about four thousand killed” were left on the spot. Kalmyks and Cossacks defeated large units of Tatars from the Kazai *ulus* twice (in 1698 and 1700).⁵⁵

Consolidation of Ayuka's position in his Khanate and in Russia improved his reputation among the Mongol-speaking peoples. The Lamaist church of Tibet appreciated his achievements, too. Legal recognition of Ayuka's high standing as a state ruler by clerical authorities took place in 1690 when the Dalai Lama ranked him as a khan (khan *tsolo*) and served him a charter (a status document) and khan seal (*tamgi*).⁵⁶ However, as mentioned above, the Russian central power started recognizing Ayuka as a khan officially only since 1697. Before 1710, he was referred to as a khan in letters of governmental and *guberniya*'s institutions only sometimes. He was mainly referred to as a ruler (*taisha*).

In 1700, Peter the First signed an armistice with Turkey for 30 years, formed an alliance with Denmark and Poland, and declared a war on Sweden on August 9. *Boyars* Boris Petrovich Sheremetev inflicted the first large defeat on Swedes at the Baltic in December 1701. B.P. Sheremetev was actively using Kalmyk cavalry even before this large battle. In May, the Kalmyk cavalry along with a dragoon regiment defeated numerous cavalry and infantry of Swedes and captured two canons, three banners, and captives. In August, a Kalmyk detachment smashed a large enemy's unit (“to prove it, they brought three hundred Swedish rifles to the main camp, and the monarch ordered to give them money for this”).⁵⁷ General-field Marshal B.P. Sheremetev inflicted another heavy defeat on Swedes in late 1701: he took eight cannons, 16 banners, and 1,500 captives.

B.P. Sheremetev ordered Kalmyks and cavalry to outflank the enemy before the battle. As a result of the sweeping and unexpected blow to the enemy's rear, the latter had to retreat in haste.

B.P. Sheremetev with his army comprising 30 thousand soldiers attacked the Swedish general Schlippenbach's army having eight thousand soldiers under his command in the Baltic region in July 1702. The Swedish army suffered a crushing defeat on July 18. Kalmyks participated in the battle, as well as in capturing the towns of Volmar (August 14, 1702), Alyst (August 25), Oreshek (October 12), Derpt (July 13, 1704), and Narva (August 9), along with the Koporye and Yamburg fortresses in 1703, too.

The situation on the western front complicated a bit in 1705: the Polish king August the Second needed substantial support; B.P. Sheremetev was defeated by the Swedish general Adam Lewenhaupt; there was a revolt in Astrakhan, which required the participation of the "*taisha* Ayuka's several thousand strong Kalmyk cavalry"⁵⁸ along with regular army under the command of Field Marshal B.P. Sheremetev to suppress it; and Swedish king Charles XII launched a campaign against Grodno. Under the circumstances, Peter I initiated one more recruitment campaign (including among Kalmyks) to fortify the southwestern border and moved the army to the west. An 8,000-soldier unit composed of Kalmyks and Yaik Cossacks came to Kiev in August 1706 where Peter I and A.D. Menshikov were staying at that time. A.D. Menshikov smashed the Swedish group comprising 28 thousand soldiers headed by General Mardefeld, who was captured along with 4,735 soldiers and officers in the vicinity of Kalicz on October 18. Over six thousand people were killed during the battle. Kalmyks, as well as Moscow cavalry, were fighting during the battle at the right wing under the direct command of A.D. Menshikov.⁵⁹

The year of 1707 turned out to be a difficult one for Russia: Charles XII was threatening to attack from the west, while a big revolt of Bashkirs, Tatars, Chuvashes, and Udmurts was going on in the east; there was also a revolt of Cossacks headed by K.A. Bulavin. The Kazan vice-governor N.A. Kudryavtsev reported to the Tsar on January 7, 1708: "The Bashkir revolt is going on, and a lot of Tatars from the Kazan uyezd as well as from many small towns of the Kama region joined them." The Tsar ordered *stolnik* Ivan Bakhmetev to go to Ayuka and try to persuade him to send 20 thousand Kalmyks against Bashkirs in January 1708. Ivan Bakhmetev had to divide the Kalmyk soldiers provided by the *taisha* into two units: he sent ten thousand soldiers in the Saratov region to pacify the rebellious Cossacks (Kalmyks walloped them in the summer), and another

ten thousand soldiers joined Bakhmetev to fight Bashkirs.⁶⁰ In addition, the Astrakhan *voevoda* P.M. Apraksin sent 1,200 soldiers, several hundreds of loyal Tatars and three thousand Kalmyks for the rescue of the besieged Terek fortress in February 1708. The fortress was unblocked and the rebels were defeated on February 26.⁶¹

While watching closely the relocations of Charles XII, Peter I kept fortifying Saint Petersburg and the army as well as coordinating the actions of the Russian troops. In June 1708, Charles XII crossed the river of Berezhina, and the first battle between the Russian and Swedish armies took place in early July. The Russian troops under the command of Generals M.M. Golitsyn and G. Flyuk attacked the Swedes near the settlement of Dobroye, in the Chernaya Napa river, on August 29. Peter I wrote the following about the results of the battle, "Golitsyn and Flyuk were lobbing shells into the enemy for two hours running and, as a result of it, three thousand soldiers were killed, not to mention those who were injured. They also seized the banners and other things."⁶²

The Kalmyk cavalry were fighting as a part of the Russian regular army in the battles as well. On September 22, 1708, six thousand Kalmyks, as a part of the Russian regular corps of ten thousand soldiers under the command of General Rodion Bour, participated in the battle near Belin against the Swedish unit that consisted of six cavalry regiments and four thousand infantry. Kalmyks encircled the Ostrograd royal regiment headed by Charles XII and wiped it off. The King miraculously managed to flee. Kalmyks along with Russian cavalry units participated in rear-guard actions against advancing enemy troops exhausting them and inflicting substantial losses on them up to Smolensk.⁶³

Charles XII had been waiting for General Lewenhaupt in vain, and, as it is well known, moved to Ukraine on September 14. Peter I reached the Lewenhaupt's group on the outskirts of the town of Propoisk, near the village of Lesnoi, on September 27, 1708. Swedes suffered a death-dealing defeat on September 28. Peter I wrote to his confidants, "we broke down the enemy and cut it to pieces. Thus, eight thousand enemies were killed (not to mention those who died as a result of injuries in the forests or were killed by Kalmyks); we got the entire wagon train consisting of 2,000 wagons as well as 16 cannons and 42 banners in the battlefield... The rest of Swedes started running down the river of Sozha and swam the river six miles downstream. Kalmyks were pursuing them, and killed many of them."⁶⁴

At the same time, the Tsar was worried about the cross-border security in the south, and he ordered the Kazan governor Peter Matveyevich

Apraksin to see Ayuka Khan and persuade him “to stay in the Volga region and protect the downstream peoples from all enemies for ever” in late 1708. The key term of the agreement was that “he, Ayuka Khan, said and promised to serve the great Tsar until the death, and be always loyal to him without fail, and roam with his *uluses* along the Volga River without leaving it.” At the same time, Ayuka promised to send a five-thousand unit under the command of his son Chakdorzhap to the North Caucasus on Peter Apraksin’s request.⁶⁵

As is known, the Poltava Battle, which took place on June 27, 1709, was one of general battles during the 1700–1721 Northern War. Getting ready for the combat, Peter the First spared no effort to enlarge and equip the army including its non-regular parts and, in particular, the cavalry. This is why he instructed the Kazan governor Peter Apraksin to spare no effort “to get about three thousand Kalmyks... from Ayuka Khan as an addition to the key army... by the month of May.” However, the horsemen unit comprising 3,300 soldiers under the command of Ayuka Khan’s son Chakdorzhap was delayed on the way through the fault of *stolnik* Ivan Bakhmetev accompanying the unit because he ordered to attack a group of Bulavin acting in the area of Buzuluk. It is probable that the Kalmyk cavalry unit was requested in addition to the units acting as a part of the regular Russian troops. It is a well-known fact that Peter I formed a special consolidated unit comprising “light-armored Kalmyk cavalry that used to be under the command of Field Marshal and Lieutenant Galets” to follow-up and capture the remains of the Swedish army. Kalmyk cavalry units as well as Cossacks and regular army units were attacking Swedes even before the Poltava Battle.⁶⁶

As we have already mentioned above, Kalmyk units took part in the strengthening of Russia’s domestic position during the period in question as well. Upon the Tsar’s instruction, Ayuka Khan suppressed Kuban mountain-dwellers (Kumyks), who had come over to the Turkish side, and made them resume their Russian allegiance in 1709.⁶⁷

At the same time, while Ayuka was engaged in solving Russia’s problems, there were some troubles in his own Khanate: strives in his clan and agitation between the ruling princes started affecting the situation in the *uluses*. Since the tsarist administration engaged Kalmyks in suppressing revolts, there was a tension between them and neighboring nations. Moreover, relations with the Dzungar Khanate worsened in the early 18th century because it sheltered the ruling *taishas* who left Ayuka willingly. In spite of Ayuka’s multiple requests, Tsewang Rabdan, the ruler of Dzungaria, refused to return 15–20 thousand tilt carts he had seized from

Ayuka's son Khan Sanchzhab when he roamed to Dzungaria in 1701. China, in its struggle with the Dzungar Khanate, decided to take the opportunity of aggravated relations between Dzungaria and the Kalmyk Khanate. With this purpose in mind, the Qing Embassy came to Kalmykia in 1712. The mission failed to achieve any success or persuade Ayuka to act against the Dzungar Khanate.

Having enlisted the support on the part of the tsarist administration and confirmed it with a new agreement of 1710, Ayuka Khan started acting, strengthening the central authority in the first place. He officially declared his elder son Chakdorzhap as his successor in 1714 and gave the khan seal to him as a confirmation. Ayuka's authority improved significantly when the outstanding Lamaist figure Shahur Lama came to Volga from Lhasa in 1718 and became the supreme lama of the Kalmyk Khanate.⁶⁸

The first legal instrument naming Ayuka, the ruler of Kalmykia, as a khan, was the agreement entitled *About allegiance of Ayuka Khan and all of his taishas and people to the Russian tsar* signed by the Kazan and Astrakhan governor and *boyar* Peter Apraksin on behalf of the Russian tsar and Ayuka Khan along with *taishas* Chemet Batyr, Cheter and Donduk-Ombo on September 5, 1710.⁶⁹ The instrument, which was published in the fourth volume (No. 2291) of the *Complete Collection of Laws of the Russian Empire*, was different from the *shert* instruments in its structure (the text had a title, was divided into six articles and bore the khan's and governor's signatures and seals), its more specific and focused contents, and also contained a new form of mutual address between the contracting parties. As we can see, Kalmyk *taishas* stopped giving *sherts* in 1683. Since that time, the relations between them and the central administration were regulated by written and oral agreements concluded with prominent state officials acting on the Tsar's behalf. It seems to us that it was not accidental that the agreement came into being. An administrative and territorial reform was carried out in Russia in December 1708 when eight *guberniyas* were formed including the Kazan *guberniya* headed by Peter Matveyevich Apraksin. The territories where Kalmyks roamed formed a part of the *guberniya*. That is why the new governor, who was also the commander of all troops located in the *guberniya* and the official in charge of the regional security, apparently initiated the agreement. The key objective of the agreement followed from the general foreign policy that Peter I pursued when, his positions in the west weakened to a certain degree, he went deeper into the southern steppes. Moreover, as was shown above, the agreement went along with Ayuka's interests too.

The agreement recognized Ayuka's merits in defending the southern frontiers of the country and the Russian population on the tsar's behalf and acknowledged his faithful service for the Russian state. Peter I expressed his satisfaction with Kalmyks' service, substantially increased the reward paid to Ayuka Khan and his *taishas*, provided them with some gunpowder and lead, and promised to protect and defend Kalmykia against their foreign enemies. Provisions of Article 1 and Ayuka Khan's reply saying that "he promised to serve His Majesty and be loyal to him until the death" confirmed that the Russian–Kalmyk relations improved and secured a special status of Kalmykia as a vassal state comprised by the Russian Empire.

In general, the 1710 agreement made under conditions of the forthcoming war with Turkey and Crimean Khanate sought to form a military alliance between the two parties, unite efforts for securing settlements in the Kazan *guberniya*, Volga and Don regions, and in the Kalmyk Khanate, and consolidate the established friendship and "sworn brotherhood." It was for the first time when a document concluded at the inter-state level acknowledged that Ayuka was a ruling khan "above many steppe hordes,"⁷⁰ meaning Nogai, Yedisan, Yembuluk, and Malibash *murzas*.

It should be noted that the Russian–Kalmyk relations were developing for more than one hundred years by the time. Kalmyks proved to be loyal to Russia in battles against Russian enemies. Thus, Russia relied on Kalmyks during the forthcoming war with Turkey. Special importance was attached to the Kalmyk cavalry in the Azov and Kuban region and in fighting Crimean Tatars. That is why Ayuka promised to send "Kalmyks headed by two *taishas*, Chemet Batyr and Cheter, Munkotemir's son, namely 10,000 men, to nomad in the Don region, in the outskirts of the Manatsky town that was close to the Cherkassky settlement"⁷¹ in the agreement (article) dated September 1710 so that Kalmyks could get closer to the theatre of operations.

Later the unit comprising ten thousand soldiers became the major restraining factor preventing Kuban Tatars from joining the Crimean Tatars, in January 1711. Moreover, Ayuka sent 20.5 thousand Kalmyks to the command general and admiral Fedor Matveyevich Apraksin who was in charge of organizing the defense in the Azov and Kuban region in June 1711. As many as 14 thousand Kalmyks headed by Donduk-Ombo as a part of a dragoon unit (3.5 thousand dragoons) under the command of Prince P.G. Lvov were sent to chase Kuban Tatars and destroy them. The casualties among the Kuban Tatars amounted to some 17 thousand men killed and about three thousand captives. Besides, two thousand camels,

32.2 thousand horses, 120 thousand cattle and 227 thousand sheep were captured. Later the Kalmyk unit crushed the Kuban *murza* Char-Aslan's unit coming back from a raid against towns and villages of the Saratov and Penza *uyezds* and set free up to two thousand captives.⁷²

However, the Prut Campaign conducted by the Russian army failed. Russia had to sign a disadvantageous truce, which bound it to return Azov to Turkey and demolish Taganrog on July 12, 1711. At the same time, the Russo-Turkish truce enabled Russia to concentrate all efforts on the ongoing war with Sweden, which sought to achieve the key goal of the time, namely to fortify Russia's position on the banks of the Baltic Sea. The Northern War ended with signing the Treaty of Nystad on August 30, 1721, according to which Sweden ceded Ingermanland, a part of Karelia, as well as entire Estland and Livland with the towns of Riga, Revel, Derpt, Narva, Vyborg, and Kexholm and islands of Osel and Dago to full "incontestable and eternal possession and control" of Russia. Russia returned the Finland Principality to Sweden.⁷³

After the successful completion of the Northern War, Peter I turned his attention again to the south—the Caspian Sea whose western and southern banks belonged to Persia. Getting ready for the Persian Campaign, Peter I left Moscow for Astrakhan in May 1722 where the army was getting together. On his way to the army, the tsar stopped in Saratov on June 20 to see Ayuka Khan and discuss the Kalmyk participation in the campaign with him. Peter I requested ten thousand Kalmyk soldiers for the forthcoming campaign. However, Ayuka could not provide such a large unit because the Khanate had not had enough time to recover from the previous wars. Finally, Peter I agreed to reduce the requested strength of the Kalmyk cavalry down to seven thousand horsemen. Peter I presented a golden sword and a belt covered with precious stones to Ayuka Khan to honor his loyal service.⁷⁴

As early as 1722 the Kalmyk cavalry joined the military actions against Persia. The Kalmyks continued their military service even after Persia and Russia signed the Petersburg peace treaty in September 1723. They participated in constructing the Holy Cross fortress and were fighting against attacks of Crimean and Kuban Tatars.

According to historians, Kalmyks' participation in the Russian–Persian war was their last contribution to the process of strengthening Russia's southern state borders during the rule of Ayuka Khan, who died on February 19, 1724 when he was 82.

We should emphasize here that Peter I considered the Kalmyk Khanate not only a military ally but also an economic partner. To develop their

economic relations, the Tsar issued an *ukase* entitled *On letting Ayuka-khan deliver his horses for sale to Moscow with exemption from any pavement duties* on November 28, 1715. The *ukase* strictly banned local authorities from imposing any duties on Kalmyks (“you must not collect any pavement duty from them and must not oppress them”). An *ukase* entitled *On annual food supplies to Ayuka Khan and on exempting his messengers from duties on goods at their disposal if their price does not exceed 3,000 rubles* and signed by Peter I in February 1719 was another notable enactment of this kind.⁷⁵

The Kalmyk Khanate’s administrative autonomy (1st–3rd quarters of 18th century)

When speaking about the Russian policy regarding Kalmyks, we must emphasize that although the tsarist administration was interested in a united and strong Khanate from the military point of view, it did not want to have an “obstinate” vassal that would try to pursue an independent policy or gain authority in the international arena.

That was a reason why the government did not hamper some Kalmyk *uluses* separating and moving to other locations in the first place (they also took into account the need to get Kalmyks closer to the theatre of military operations), sometimes even supporting this kind of separatism (for example, when a part of Kalmyks left for the Don river in 1690). Secondly, the government was striving to create conditions for converting Kalmyks to Orthodoxy. Religion in Peter the Great’s era became an ideological tool to make a trustworthy citizen. The dissemination of Christianity among Kalmyks was a subject of agreements as early as 1677. So much importance was attached to the issue that it was discussed even in the Senate in 1725, which demanded from the Astrakhan governor A.P. Volynsky to pursue this policy “based on a good will rather than compulsion.”⁷⁶ Thus, it was not by accident that Field Marshal M.M. Golitsyn backed up Baksadai-Dorgi, one of Ayuka Khan’s grandchildren, in 1726, when the latter adopted Orthodoxy under the name of Peter Taishin.⁷⁷ We think that the official tsarist administration’s policy aimed at converting Kalmyks to Orthodoxy, which was actively pursued starting from the second half of the 18th century, should be considered as an attempt to disunite non-Peoples of Russia and start their spiritual enslavement by the method that is well-known in history, namely through

destroying their native and indigenous religion that had constituted the basis of the nation's customs, traditions, culture, and intellectual values, rather than mere religious beliefs. We know that as many as 400 thousand non-Russian residents of the Volga region were baptized by the middle of the 18th century.

Another step the government took, to make Kalmykia a part of the Russian common administration system and to gain control over the situation in the Khanate, was executing unofficial and official supervision over the actions of the Khanate rulers. In the middle of 1715, Peter I used Ayuka Khan's request to defend Kalmyks against Crimean and Kuban Tatars, Bashkirs, and Kara-Kalpaks as a pretext to send *stolnik* D.Ye. Bakhmetiyev with a unit comprising 600 soldiers to Kalmykia. It was the beginning of a campaign undertaken by the Russian authorities against the Kalmyk Khanate's sovereignty (the tsarist administration had a similar experience in Ukraine as early as 1709). According to the Foreign Affairs Collegium's instruction issued to *stolnik* D.Ye. Bakhmetiyev as the chief of the Kalmyk khan's security unit, he was to "supervise over the khan's and Kalmyks' political behavior." Bakhmetiyev, first of all, was to "recommend the khan that he be loyal to His Majesty in every aspect." Supervising the khan's moods and behavior, Bakhmetiyev was to carry out reconnaissance in secret, "keep it strictly confidential"⁷⁸ and report to higher echelons. One of Bakhmetiyev's key objectives was "to prevent the khan and Kalmyks from any disputes with Turkish citizens and from any peaceful negotiations or any confidential and written correspondence between them without His Majesty's instructions."⁷⁹

The Russian central administration's plenipotentiary representative body—Kalmyk Department—(forming a part of the executive authority system [including the Foreign Affairs Collegium, Kazan governor and then the Astrakhan governor] fulfilling administrative and supervising functions) was formed during the period. Little by little, it started interfering in home affairs of the Kalmyk Khanate. Soon Ayuka Khan realized the real role Bakhmetiyev played and demanded that the latter and his unit be relocated to Saratov. However, this could not prevent the *stolnik* from supervising over the Khanate's policy.

The new policy pursued by the tsarist administration with regard to the Kalmyk Khanate was also reflected in the instruction issued by the Senate to the Astrakhan governor Artemiy Petrovich Volynsky in July 1720. A.P. Volynsky was instructed to show "a kind and tender attitude towards Ayuka and all Kalmyks, show respect to them, adapt letters and correspondence to their previous traditions and watch closely so that nobody

could cause any disputes or exasperation regarding them but, on the contrary, spare no effort to make them loyal and obedient to His Majesty for ever and ever.” The instruction emphasized, “you can and must have your people close to them as well as Ayuka and his son Chavderjap both clearly and secretly so, that you could learn about everything that is going on around them through your people, and prevent everything that can harm His Majesty’s interests; in particular, you must prevent their friendship with Turks, Persians, Crimeans, and Kubans (so that to impede any friendship or relations between them), as well as with Bakhty Girey Deli Sultan and his confederates, so that Kalmyks did not render any assistance to them or promoted any attacks against His Majesty’s lands.”⁸⁰

Moreover, the governor was instructed to spare no effort in protecting Kalmyks against attacks of “Turks and other peoples” and to prevent their “quarrels with Don, Yaik and Greben Cossacks and other subjects of His Majesty.” Moreover, the governor was to arrange the conversion of Tatars and other peoples to Orthodoxy and promote trade and economic relations.⁸¹

At the same time, taking into consideration the strength and importance of the Kalmyk Khanate and its cavalry, the tsarist government started searching for a candidate for the khan’s throne, who would be obedient and follow the dictation from the central administration. Captain V.P. Beklemishev, who was appointed as the chief of the security unit in December 1722, was charged with a corresponding task. The central authorities believed that Ayuka Khan’s nephew Dorgi Nazarov, who signed a reverse instrument in 1722 under which he was to make his son an *amanat* in exchange for the khan’s title for himself, was the best candidate for the title.

The Senate attached special significance to the situation in the Kalmyk Khanate after Ayuka Khan’s death in April 1724. In May 1724, Astrakhan governor A.P. Volynsky left for Kalmyk *uluses* instructed by Peter I to make Dorgi Nazarov, with whom they had reached a preliminary agreement, the Kalmyk khan by all means (“by being kind and presenting gifts to them; but if this is in vain, you must wage a war against them as if they were enemies”⁸²). However, later Dorgi Nazarov rejected the offer. He explained his refusal to A.P. Volynsky as follows: “upon Ayuka Khan’s death his son Cheren-Dunduk or his closest relatives, Donduk-Ombo or Dosang, should be the khan. Although I belong to the same family, they are closer to Ayuka than I am. Thus, if I become the khan, they will not be obedient to me.”⁸³

The following events showed that the tsarist administration was interested in a weak candidate for the khan’s throne. A.P. Volynsky described

one of the candidates, Ayuka Khan's son Tseren-Donduk, as a stupid person, unlike Donduk-Ombo, who was able to make decisions and act "without any assistance." However, eventually he selected the former one for all that.

Ayuka Khan's wish was probably taken into account. Shahur Lama played an important role in making Tseren-Donduk the regent as well. He said to A.P. Volynsky, "He will be loyal to His Emperor's Majesty hereinafter and will never leave the position; if Tseren-Donduk conceives of something wrong, I will inform you, and we can replace him."⁸⁴ Despite the efforts, the tsarist administration eventually failed to change the power inheritance procedure in the Khanate and establish full control there through its own protégé.

On September 19, 1724, Tseren-Donduk swore fealty to His Emperor's Majesty promising to follow all his instructions; "not to oppose His Emperor's Majesty and to prevent other rulers from doing so, and if he learns about somebody's conspiracy, he must inform about this in advance; not to maintain any friendly relations with His Emperor's Majesty's enemies or exchange letters with foreigners unless instructed to do so; to administer justice in an appropriate way, to exclude any bankruptcy and extirpate theft and stealing without mercy; not to let Tatars stay in his *uluses* and prohibit other lords from doing so."⁸⁵

After taking his oath, Tseren-Donduk became a loyal subject and Empress Catherine the First conferred the title of the Kalmyk Khanate's regent on him by her imperial order of February 22, 1725. It is interesting that apart from Tseren-Donduk, Donduk-Ombo, Donduk-Dashi, and other Kalmyk lords that swore fealty to Peter I on September 19, 1724, noble *zaisangs* took an oath of allegiance to Peter the Great, too, and promised to obey Governor Tseren-Donduk until the khan would be appointed by an *ukase*.⁸⁶ Apparently, it was A.P. Volynsky's idea to administer the oath to other ruling *taishas* along with Tseren-Donduk because he was worried about the complicated situation in the Kalmyk Khanate, which had resulted from ongoing power struggle. A.P. Volynsky described the political situation in the Khanate in his letter to Osterman of July 1724 as follows: "I have seen a lot, dear sir, in my whole life, but I have never seen such a hustle, and it makes me sad."⁸⁷ At the same time, we should emphasize that he also contributed to the formation of the situation in the Khanate since he was taking an active part in the fight among the khan's children and grandchildren. A.P. Volynsky wrote to Empress Catherine Alexeyevna: "I will spare no effort to prevent the Dosang's ruin, and with this purpose and upon his request I sent five poods of gunpowder and five poods of lead to him (I did it secretly and I hope the khan would not learn

about it); at the same time, I take care to keep a balance between the khan and Dosang, for should any of them gains strength, it is going to be much more difficult to make him the khan after Ayuka's death."⁸⁸

The very contents of the oath confirmed that the tsarist administration was trying to change the legal status of the Kalmyk Khanate unilaterally, to terminate previous agreements, to bring the khanate under control, to make it dependent on Russia within the common state control mechanism, and to determine even the key lines of the Khanate's home activities. Thus, to improve its position with this respect and pursue a policy, which would be advantageous to it, the tsarist administration resorted to inciting the feudal struggle developing within the Kalmyk Khanate. A.P. Volynsky wrote: "I wanted to divide Kalmyks into two parties, and I was backing up Dosang [who opposed Tseren-Donduk—*K.M.*] more than the other party until now."⁸⁹ Many of his followers conducted the same policy seeking to artificially divide and set various forces within the khanate against each other for many centuries.

It was not accidental, therefore, that after examining the situation in the Kalmyk Khanate at a session chaired by Empress Catherine Alexeyevna on December 15, 1725, the Secret Council decided to keep A.P. Volynsky in charge of the Kalmyk issue but subordinate him to the field marshal, Prince M.M. Golitsyn, the commander of the Volga and Don regional army. Taking into account the importance of the Kalmyk-related problems, the Empress discharged A.P. Volynsky from some of the governor's functions and appointed a vice-governor to assist him. The Supreme Secret Council removed A.P. Volynsky from duties related to the Kalmyk issues almost one year later, in the autumn of 1726.⁹⁰

Taking into account the Russian policy, we think that the long-term seven-year Tseren-Donduk's regency was a natural thing. It is known that Empress Anna Ioannovna had to make him the khan only in early 1731 due to a number of objective reasons (armed clashes between the ruling *taishas* broke out again; the Manchuria court sent his messengers to the Khanate). The Charter entitled *On the appointment of Cheren-Donduk the Kalmyk khan* issued on February 17, 1731 read that Tseren-Donduk, Kalmyk Khanate regent, "was loyal to us and the State, and to ensure a better control over the Kalmyk people and protect it against any offences as well as to ensure its loyalty and allegiance to us, hereby I confer the Kalmyk Khan title on the above-mentioned Cheren-Donduk." Then the Charter emphasized, "you must serve us as faithfully and diligently in every respect and comply with all of our instructions as your father, Ayuka-Khan did, and as a loyal subject should do."⁹¹

Here we should emphasize a very important aspect that introduced principal changes in Kalmyks relations with Russia: now it was the Russian supreme power—the emperor—who was to confer the khan's title on the Kalmyk ruler. This confirms that Kalmykia became an integral part of Russia in every legal respect in the 1730s.

In this connection, the oath given by Tseren-Donduk to Empress Anna Ioannovna in front of Astrakhan governor I.P. Izmailov and Colonel V.P. Beklemishev on May 1, 1731 included a substantial addition: "Now when the Khan's title is conferred on me to be the chief of the entire Kalmyk people, I obey to serve loyally as every subject must do... and to be a loyal, good, and obedient subject."⁹²

The events that lasted for almost 150 years and demonstrated how complicated the Kalmyks' accession to the Russian state and the development of mutual Russian–Kalmyk relations were provide sufficient grounds for us to agree with the opinion expressed by great historian S.M. Solovyov, who said "the strong Kolmaki Horde came to Volga, and the state seized it, and it was convulsing in its powerful grips in vain."⁹³

As soon as Russia made sure in the 1730s that its "grip" was strong enough, it started managing Kalmyk issues in a rather different manner, as if taking for granted the fact that Kalmyks were its subjects. The tsarist administration started discharging and appointing rulers of Kalmykia, as well as conferring high ranks on them or awarding them with local power symbols. Thus, Tseren-Donduk was stripped of his khan's title with a rather bizarre substantiation ("he proved to be a weak ruler, and on the top of it, he lapsed into drinking") even though the above-mentioned charter issued four years earlier read, "as far as we can see, the aforesaid regent Tseren-Donduk has always been loyal to us and our state."

It seems to us that the actual reason behind the dismissal of Tseren-Donduk was different from the one mentioned to ground the decision. Despite his personal shortcomings, Tseren-Donduk used to be good for the tsarist administration. However, faced with a forthcoming conflict with Turkey and the Crimean Khanate, Russia needed a strong and authoritative figure to mobilize Kalmyk military resources. Tseren-Donduk was replaced with Ayuka Khan's grandson Donduk-Ombo.⁹⁴ Actually, some provisions of the *Charter issued to the chief ruler of the Kalmyk people, Donduk-Ombo, to confer the khan's title on him* dated March 3, 1737 confirm this. In particular, it said, "to acknowledge your diligence and efforts aimed at fighting with our enemies, Kubans, hereby we graciously confer the Kalmyk khan's title on you, our subject... and we will order you to take part in the campaign against the Crimea."⁹⁵

At the same time, there was another reason (an internal one) for Tseren-Donduk's removal. When he was proclaimed the khan, it caused serious dissatisfaction on the part of Donduk-Ombo and his followers. It caused open opposition between the two groups that would sometimes slide into armed clashes. As a result of the split, some Kalmyk *uluses* (Donduk-Ombo's ones) moved to the territory where Kuban Tatars, who were Turkish subjects, lived, and other Kalmyks (Dorgi Nazarov's ones) migrated to the Yaik region. Under conditions of ceaseless clashes among *taishas* as well as chaos and confusion reigning in Kalmyk *uluses*, Kalmyks' raids against neighboring peoples and some settlements in the Volga region became more frequent. The Senate examined the issue about the raids on September 9, 1731 and instructed the Foreign Affairs Collegium and Military Collegium to take measures "to deter Kalmyks from carrying out raids, punish the guilty ones and supervise them strictly. And in case Kalmyks are not deterred from raids through neglect or indulgence, their chiefs shall be made answerable for them without fail."⁹⁶ There was a session of the Cabinet on July 27, 1734 where three of the key Cabinet members—Count A.I. Osterman, Count G.I. Golovnin, and Prince A.M. Cherkasskiy—discussed the situation that shaped up in the Kalmyk Khanate. The Cabinet decided on making peace between Donduk-Ombo and the khan.⁹⁷ Tseren-Donduk was "made answerable" in due time.

Empress Anna Ioannovna appointed Donduk-Ombo the chief ruler of the Kalmyk people in her imperial order "to restore the former silence and peace and make them loyal to us" on March 7, 1735. However, the khan's title was conferred on him only two years later.⁹⁸ Outstanding state official and scientist Fyodor Ivanovich Soimonov declared Donduk-Ombo the khan and handed the khan's power symbols—a banner, sword, fur coat, and cap—to him. He also read off the Empress' order to launch a campaign against the Crimean Khanate. First sergeant from the Don Danila Yefremov⁹⁹ was present at the official ceremony.

Donduk-Ombo joined the military actions conducted in the North Caucasus in the very first years of his reign. The Empress distinguished his special military achievements related to smashing down the Kuban and Mountain Tatars twice, in 1736 and 1738. The charter issued by Empress Anna Ioannovna on August 11, 1736 read as follows, "And now I, the great Empress, have seen your faithful obedience, prompt execution of my orders and duly diligence shown at my service when fighting with the Kuban Tatars, and I hope that, you will follow my charters sent to you before, and send a numerous and strong Kalmyk unit to the Crimea without

delay. As a token of my empress' favor to you and all Kalmyk *taishas* I order hereby to pay my empress' salary to you for your whole lifetime in addition to the payment you were scheduled to receive before, in the amount of 2,500 rubles and 1,000 quarters of flour per year." The Cabinet suggested doubling the khan's salary for his faithful service "during the current war with Turks as a token of the Empress' favor" the same November, and the Empress approved of this proposal.¹⁰⁰

N.N. Palmov was right when he said that "Donduk-Ombo and Kalmyk rulers obtained rich awards from the Russian government. However, the services they rendered to Russia during the war with Turkey of 1735–1739, when great numbers of Kalmyk soldiers operated in the North Caucasus and in the Crimea, were of great value as well."¹⁰¹

The short reign of khan Donduk-Ombo (1735–1741) was characterized by a noticeable centralization of the supreme power in the Khanate and a greater degree of independence in managing its internal affairs. Not only his commitment, energy, and authority, but also his military achievements and support on the part of the Russian government (which was balanced by means of protectionism regarding Donduk-Dashi, the key opponent of Donduk-Ombo), contributed to this.

Moreover, being worried about the increasingly aggravated situation in Kalmyk *uluses*, in particular due to the downright opposition against the khan on the part of his son Galdan-Norbo, the tsarist administration tried to restrain Donduk-Ombo's despotism towards the rulers and took measures to restrict his arbitrary actions. In September 1739 it sent an armed unit headed by Colonel L.V. Boborykin for a permanent stay in *uluses* in summertime and in the settlements close to the khan's headquarters in the winter. The unit's key objective was to make sure that the khan's actions complied with directives from the center.¹⁰²

The throne was free for more than four months because of the internecine struggle for power that broke out after Donduk-Ombo Khan's death despite the fact that before his death he appointed his ten-year son Randul as his successor. Donduk-Ombo's wife Dzhan was to rule until he came of age. At the same time, Ayuka Khan's last son Galdan Danjin, who was backed up by many lords except for the khan's wife Dzhan and her followers, was a real candidate to mount the throne. Galdan-Danjin suffered a defeat and was killed during an armed clash between the two key groups claiming the throne in the summer of 1741.

Then the tsar's administration, which backed up Donduk-Dashi, received the long-awaited proposal "from the Kalmyk people" to delegate authority over the Kalmyk people to Donduk-Dashi, Ayuka Khan's grand-

son, in July 1741. Donduk-Dashi was appointed as the regent of the Kalmyk Khanate based on the royal *ukase* of Emperor Ivan VI Antonovich on July 31, 1741 and approved as the Kalmyk people's ruler by Empress Elizabeth Petrovna on December 15 (he gave the reverse instrument to the government on September 4; the oath was taken on November 16, 1741).¹⁰³

As a matter of fact, the obligations incurred by Donduk-Dashi when he was made the Khanate regent were the same as those incurred by his predecessors: follow orders faithfully and diligently, prevent Christianized Kalmyks from joining *uluses*, etc. All of them had one thing in common: the tsarist administration steadily pursued the policy of restricting and weakening the Kalmyk ruler's power, as well as his authorities in the field of foreign relations and splitting the Kalmyk population by using religion.

As for the foreign political activities, the Russian Senate expressed its opinion on the subject explicitly as early as 1731, "being in Russian allegiance, the Kalmyk people must not act independently and with no dictation of the Russian Government."¹⁰⁴

Under the circumstances that were formed by the moment, Donduk-Dashi had to agree to make his little and only son Asarai a hostage "as a token of a greater loyalty," and was the first Kalmyk ruler who became personally dependant even on the provincial administration. This fact seriously restricted his freedom of action and he had to adhere to and perform obligations incurred by him as well as act "according to orders." However, it had a negative effect on Russia, too, since Donduk-Dashi took deep offence because of the *amanat*. Distrust for him as well as the fact he made his son a hostage caused a stir in Kalmykia and affected his reputation.

So why did the tsarist administration insist on his son being made an *amanat* when, there seemed to be no need for this in the middle of the 18th century? We think that the drives for this were more important than just a mere intention to make the Kalmyk ruler serve loyally and perform his duties. The main reason was obviously to keep Kalmyks inside Russia and prevent their migration to Dzungaria (the tsarist administration was informed about it).

Though Donduk-Dashi was a regent for a longer period than other khans (almost for 16 years), he went down in the history of Kalmykia as a statesman who contributed a lot to the development of economy and legislation, brought order to the Khanate and maintained smooth and principle-based relations with Russian authorities. At the same time, officials from Russian

institutions started interfering in the control over the Kalmyk Khanate and in its internal affairs on an active basis during the period of his rule.

Donduk-Dashi's letter of October 1745 to the Astrakhan governor confirms this. He complained about lords from his *uluses* and blamed provincial officials for arousing discord in relations with his subjects in the letter. Donduk-Dashi made an exact presentation of the Kalmyk Khanate's position as a part of the Russian state and of how it was controlled in the middle of the 18th century in his letter to the Astrakhan governor D.F. Yeropkin: "though I am the chief of my nation, I cannot do a thing without your permission."¹⁰⁵

The khan seemed to have wielded unlimited power in the Khanate home affairs in accordance with the form of the government and state structure. However, the khan's power was becoming more and more illusory and formal as the absolute monarchy was consolidating in Russia. While *voevodas* did not meddle in Kalmyks' internal affairs and served just as mediators in their relations with the central authority before the early 18th century, the Kazan and Astrakhan governors (1708–1771), as well as Russian administration's representatives accredited to khans, (1715–1771) established strict control over the Khanate's home affairs and interfered with them on an active basis by defining the top personnel policy. In fact, they governed all aspects of the Khanate's policy. Accredited plenipotentiary representatives (D.Ye. Bakhmetiyev, V.P. Beklemishev, L.V. Boborykin, N.G. Spitsyn, etc.), having special-purpose military units at their disposal, supervised over the situation in the Kalmyk Khanate. However, when Donduk-Dashi was appointed as the regent in 1741, the special-purpose military unit had to provide military intervention in the Khanate's internal affairs in addition to supervising functions. Secret adviser Vasilii Nikitich Tatishchev, having a large armed unit (up to one thousand Don Cossacks) at his disposal, was sent to the Kalmyk Khanate on such a mission. While the above-mentioned representatives used to be accredited at the khan's headquarters, V.N. Tatishchev and his unit were accommodated in the Yenotaevskaya fortress.

Thus, the policy of control and secret supervision that was introduced officially in 1715 and approved by the Senate in 1720 was gradually becoming one of the key mechanisms of control and management of the Kalmyk Khanate. At first all mechanisms of control were concentrated in the Posolsky *Prikaz* and later in the Foreign Affairs Collegium. As for current and everyday problems in Kalmykia, representatives coordinated their activities with the Astrakhan governor.

When Vasiliy Tatishchev became the Astrakhan governor (on December 31, 1741), he was charged with all issues of Kalmykian local control while the Foreign Affairs Collegium (Chancellor Alexey Petrovich Bestuzhev-Ryumin and Vice-chancellor Mikhail Illarionovich Vorontsov) exercised overall control over Kalmykia. When Empress Elizabeth Petrovna acceded to the throne on November 25, 1741, she started solving Kalmyk problems on an active basis. Chancellor and Prince Alexey Mikhailovich Cherkasskiy, who was in charge of foreign affairs in the Senate and oriented in Kalmyk problems well, played an important role in this aspect. First of all, they took measures to strengthen the power of regent Donduk-Dashi: upon the instruction of the Foreign Affairs Collegium, Tseren-Donduk's and Galdan-Danjin's *uluses* were given to him.¹⁰⁶

At the same time, measures were taken to "calm down" Dzhan, Donduk-Ombo's widow. She was brought along with her daughters and junior son Randul to Moscow in September–October 1742. She was baptized and given the name of Princess Vera Dondukova. Three of her sons—Dodba, Asarai, and Djubasar—joined her in Moscow a year later and were baptized as well (Asarai was given the name of Iona Dondukov and originated the Dondukov-Korsakov's clan). In June 1745 Donduk-Dashi arrested his brother Bodong, one of his strongest rivals, and authorities exiled him to Astrakhan.

However, in spite of Donduk-Dashi's requests about making the *uluses* that were roaming independently a part of the Khanate (in general, he meant the Laban-Donduk's Derbet *ulus* roaming in the Don region) and about provision of greater independence in internal affairs during his audience with Elizabeth Petrovna on June 17 and September 16, 1742, the tsarist administration was not in a hurry to comply with them. At the same time, it warned V.N. Tatishchev more than once that it was inadmissible to meddle in every minute problem of Kalmyks' internal affairs not to show that "we want to get rid of their independence at all."¹⁰⁷

Due to the well-balanced relations between the regent and *taishas* inside the Kalmyk Khanate, Donduk-Dashi held the regent's office for a long time. Elizabeth Petrovna signed the *ukase* appointing Donduk-Dashi as the khan and his son Ubashi as the Khanate regent to prevent the internecine war for power only on March 21, 1757. The Russian foreign affairs department head, Chancellor A.P. Bestuzhev-Ryumin, informed Donduk-Dashi about his appointment as the khan on May 11, 1757. It is quite possible that the fact that Russia was getting ready for the Seven Years War (1756–1763), when it was necessary to engage Kalmyks in military operations, determined Donduk-Dashi's appointment as the khan. There was a

session of the Conference on the problem of the war with the participation of the Empress and heads of the military and foreign affairs departments at the Empress' court on February 7, 1757. Upon the suggestion made by Field Marshal S.F. Apraksin, the Conference decided "to send a Kalmyk army in the amount of eight thousand soldiers to take part in the campaign."¹⁰⁸ The Kalmyk cavalry that was a part of the irregular body of troops under the command of General Sibilsky set off to its destination point as early as the same month.

The official ceremony of Donduk-Dashi's proclamation as the khan took place more than a year later, on April 30, 1758. Astrakhan governor A.S. Zhilin participated in the ceremony. The Kalmyk cavalry were taking part successfully in military actions as a part of the Russian army during the Seven Years War. General Sibilsky wrote in his memoirs later, "Russian officers say they use Kalmyks for vanguard service only to clear off the way for the army and inspire fear and terror among the enemies."¹⁰⁹

Donduk-Dashi held the khan office for less than three years—he died on January 21, 1761. During the last years of his life, Donduk-Dashi compiled a new Legal Code in addition to the Great Code of 1640. More than a century passed between the Great Code and Donduk-Dashi's Legal Code. The period was rich with social and political events of much importance. Kalmyks finally segregated from the main part of Oirats, formed a khanate of their own and found themselves in a different ethnic and political environment having an effect on their economic, social, political, and spiritual life. Thus, it became necessary to lay a new legal basis complying with interests of the Kalmyk society of the time. It seems that the Russian law, in particular, the manifesto entitled *About granting independence and liberty to the entire class of Russian nobles* of 1762, had a great impact on the Kalmyk laws.

The key objectives of the Code were to strengthen the Khanate's independence in the field of managing its internal affairs and improve the unity between *taishas* as well as to put an end to intestine strives. The lawmaker was worried about the future of his nation in the first place. Russian historiographers ascribe the Legal Code to Donduk-Dashi only. We can agree to the title "Donduk-Dashi's Legal Code" if Donduk-Dashi is not the author but head of composite authors. The foreword said, "Donduk-Dashi consulted supreme clergymen—Rabjampa-Luzan, Rabjampa-Sandji-Djamtsa, Baldan-Gabtsu, Abu-Gelyung, Longrik-Chos-Rje, and Nagban-Sandji, as well as their disciples—and shortly wrote down (represented)" fundamentals of religious, state, and civil legal norms.

The structure and contents of the laws show that the authors were familiar with the Russian legislation. Unlike the Great Code and like the Code of Laws (*Sobornoe ulozhenie*) of 1649, the first section of the Code is devoted to religion and clergymen, as well as protection of their rights. At the same time, a lot of references were made to regulations from the Great Code. The Legal Code introduced norms stimulating clergymen to study: “those clergymen who do their best to study reading, writing, and art, will be awarded and respected according to their diligence and merits.” The lawmaker was worried about the problem of education among clergymen, noblemen, and common people as well. Article 7, Section 2 said: “In case a nobleman’s son does not study the Mongol reading and writing, his father will be fined in the amount of a three-year-old horse, and the son will be sent to a teacher to receive education; the fine imposed on a publicly known person for the same fault shall make up a three-year-old sheep; a man of the common people shall pay fifteen kopecks... If they fail to have their son educated by the time he is 15 years old, the father shall be punished for that.”

Criminal legislation stipulated a system of punishments. While the Great Code provided for punishment in the form of cattle only, Donduk-Dashi’s laws introduced corporal punishment as well. A new personal crime—kidnapping—was stipulated in the Code. The punishment provided by the Great Code for this crime was equal to the punishment for murder. Speaking about property crimes, special attention was paid to cattle stealing. The punishment for stealing other kinds of property depended on the cost of the stolen property (exceeding a hundred kopecks). Since cattle and property thefts were widespread, the procedure for letting a visitor stay for the night was regulated in detail. The host accommodating a visitor for the night was to learn about him in detail, inform local authorities about him, and introduce him to his friends. A host failing to comply with the regulations incurred property responsibility.

The procedural law was given considerable attention in the Code of Laws. It named officials who delivered justice: *yargache* (court head), whose key objective was to ensure fair justice; judge; messenger; official executing decisions made by the judge. The Code provided for two specific procedural forms of prejudicial inquiry: following in the tracks and finding a witness. Following in the tracks meant searching for the criminal by his tracks, meaning that the snow, sand, or solid mud tracks of the stolen cattle could show the way to the criminal. However, it was necessary to find a witness as well.

The law provided for a system of proofs including the body of testimonial evidence. Eyewitnesses of cattle thefts obtained a reward—a four-year-old camel from the thief's property. If a witness gave false testimony, he was subjected to corporal punishment: 15 scourge strokes. Moreover, he was to give a specific number of cattle in his prince's favor. The oath to be taken by the defendant and plaintiff was a special type of proof. The latter was to provide that the defendant appeared before the court accompanied by the witness. In case the defendant failed to appear before the court after the third notice to appear, he was to pay a fine of two three-year-old horses, and the judgment was made by default.

After Donduk-Dashi's death, his son Ubashi who was appointed the regent as early as 1757 took control of the Khanate. In spite of the complicated situation in the Kalmyk Khanate (the problem related to returning the Derbet *uluses* from the Don River, migration of *noyons* from the Ikitsokhurovsky *ulus* to the Don region, etc.), Ubashi inherited the throne in a quiet way, without any struggle. Central authorities approved him as the regent in August 1762. Astrakhan governor V. Neronov declared him the regent of the Kalmyk Khanate officially in October of the same year.¹¹⁰

Catherine the Second succeeded to the Russian throne by that time; Chancellor M.I. Vorontsov became the head of the Foreign Affairs Department somewhat earlier. When they started governing the country and foreign affairs, respectively, the tsarist administration's politics regarding the Kalmyk Khanate underwent some changes. Apparently a tendency appeared towards suppressing separatism inside the Khanate and "putting an end to discords between them [Kalmyks] to keep them as one now and prevent any dissents between them,"¹¹¹ as well as to strengthen the khan's power and improve the position of local authorities in managing internal affairs. At the same time, the khan's power was restricted by strengthening the position of *Zargo*—a collegial, legal, and representative body.

The new tsarist administration's policy was reflected in two documents passed on the same day—August 12, 1762: the Charter issued by Catherine II to the Khanate regent Ubashi and the chancellor's letter (chief of the Foreign Affairs Department M.I. Vorontsov) to Derbet *taisha* Galdan-Tseren. The letter banned the *taisha* from roaming beyond the *uluses* of the Khanate. The letter suggested that Galdan-Tseren and Tsebek-Dorzhi, Ayuka's grandson that claimed the entire Bagatsokhurovsky *ulus*, should solve all problems related to roaming with the local *Zargo* or with A.D. Bakhteyev, newly appointed envoy for Kalmyk affairs taking over General N.G. Spitsyn.

In spite of the impact of the Russian economy and market on the economic activities of the Kalmyk Khanate, there were no substantial changes in the social structure of the population except for the obvious differentiation between the two key classes—feudal lords and vassals—in the 1630s and 1670s. Due to new types of economic activities, fishermen, small traders, and craftsmen appeared among vassals. However, adult men had to spend almost all their time in military service in the last quarter of the 18th century. It undermined the economy of the Kalmyk Khanate to a great extent. Wars that Russia waged required the permanent involvement of up to 30–40 thousand Kalmyks and up to 70–80 thousand horses. Moreover, the soldiers were to be maintained and equipped at the expense of the Khanate's population.

There were no substantial changes either in the nature of the economy (based on nomad cattle breeding) or land property in Kalmykia. Horses, sheep, camels, and livestock formed a part of the cattle breeding structure. At the same time, livestock was playing an increasingly important role in the economy, while the role of horses was becoming less significant. In addition to being the basis of the economy, cattle served as a breadwinner, source of wealth, and indicator of the social status for Kalmyks. According to historians, an average Kalmyk family owned 60–150 sheep, 10–50 horses, 10–30 cows and bulls, and 5–15 camels.¹¹² As for Kalmyk feudal lords, they owned much more cattle (according to notes of travelers and tsar officials, they owned “many thousands” and “great many” of horses, sheep, and camels).

Hunting developed as an accessory branch of economy during the period as well; fishing was developing to a degree, too. A new branch of economy—agriculture—was emerging. At the same time, it played only a moderate role in the Kalmyk economy. Agricultural raw materials for domestic needs and for sale on the market were processed using primitive manual methods.

Though it was the tsarist administration that had the right of property in the territories where Kalmyks were roaming while the Kalmyk khan was merely a formal owner of the land given to him, he enjoyed the sole right to manage the pasture grounds and nomad camps. However, the right of property became the factor governing the land redistribution in the Kalmyk steppe. Issues of land ownership and use underwent some changes. Although the tsarist administration transferred the pasture territories and nomad camps into Kalmyks' possession, it started cutting down their pasture grounds and transferring them to migrants.

A low level of the social division of labor, undeveloped processing industry, and barter determined the situation on the home market. At the

same time, Kalmyk feudal lords started supplying large numbers of horses and livestock beyond the territory of Kalmykia and to settlements in the Volga region. The tsarist administration encouraged this process by exempting Kalmyks from paying duties when the cost of their goods did not exceed three thousand rubles. The following cancellation of internal custom duties beginning from April 1, 1754 (according to an *ukase* dated December 20, 1753) contributed much to the growth and development of domestic trade within Russia including within its regions.

According to historic and literary sources, the social and state structure of the Kalmyk Khanate in the 18th century was still similar to that of the Dzungar Khanate. At the same time, when comparing them in this respect we should emphasize the following substantial difference: the Kalmyk Khanate was a part of another state and depended on it. And yet, while there were several very similar principles and mechanisms in public administration, the essence of administration along with the scope and issues it dealt with were fundamentally different. The khan was the head of both the Kalmyk and Dzungar Khanates. Khans managed their states with the aid of a collegial body based on a council comprising minor *taishas* accredited by the major *taisha*—the *Zargo*, which was both a supreme judicial and executive authority. The *Zargo* comprised eight people, typically the khan's relatives and confidants from his *uluses*. In addition to being a judicial and advisory body, the *Zargo* served as the khan's administration. The body was in charge of an issue vitally important for nomad's cattle breeding, namely the distribution of pasture territories among ruling princes. As the head of the *Zargo* and key owner of the land, the khan approved of decisions concerning distributing nomads' territories in the Khanate.¹¹³

The Great Code of the Nomads of 1640 and Donduk-Dashi's laws of 1758 regulated the domestic law, order, justice, and activities of authorities in the Kalmyk Khanate. New Regulations on the *Zargo* approved by Catherine the Second were enforced in 1762. According to the Regulations, the *Zargo* was reformed and, actually, became the Kalmyk Khanate's state body that became a component in Russia's system of government agencies. The tsarist administration considered the *Zargo* "the national Kalmyk government" staffed with officials that received their salary from the state. In its activities the agency was subordinate to both the Foreign Affairs Collegium and directly Empress Catherine II. The new Regulations about the *Zargo* said that in case of any disagreements when settling an important issue, and when the *Zargo* failed to form a common opinion on the issue, "it was necessary to report about this and suspend the issue until Her Imperial Majesty made a decision."¹¹⁴ This shows that Russia paid close attention to the Kalmyk Khanate.

According to the Regulations, the *Zargo* consisted of eight members (judges) in the following proportion: three *zaisangs* representing the regent's *uluses*; a clergyman or *zaisang* representing the clergys, a representative of "the Torgout Tsokhurs," a representative of "the Torgout Tabun Otoks," and one representative from both the Derbet and Khoshout *uluses*. The *Zargo* judges were elected from among *ulus zaisangs* by casting lots, that is, elements of appointment by election were introduced. All the *Zargo* members—judges—enjoyed equal rights and had a casting vote. The eldest or senior judge from the *zaisangs* could be elected the chairman of the *Zargo*. The chairman would be elected by judges with the regent's participation. The first *zaisang* of the Khanate, Dashi-Donduk, acting as the head-quarter chief in the army, was the senior judge. The tsarist administration closely supervised the activities of the *Zargo*. A Russian officer (the commissioner on Kalmyk issues was Bakhteyev) was a part of the *Zargo* under the central authority's order.¹¹⁵

The procedure for the *Zargo* to take decisions that did not require a subsequent regent's approval and were made by a majority of judges' votes was regulated in detail. In the case "of an equal number of votes won by two sides, you should inform the Khanate regent and the Russian commissioner in charge of Kalmyk affairs at the same time." When it was necessary to make an urgent decision on a controversial matter, the legislator recommended "gathering Kalmyk *noyons* and noble *zaisangs* roaming in the nearby territory for the *Zargo*, making a collegial decision and informing My Majesty thereof."¹¹⁶

Thus, the Kalmyk Khanate became a part of the Russian common public administration system by the early 1760s. It was not by accident that the Charter of August 12, 1762 was addressed to "our regent in the Khanate." However, the Khanate acquired a legal status of administrative autonomy and remained relatively independent at the same time. Thus, its position as a part of the Russian state administration system was undergoing gradual changes. The tsarist administration made attempts to restrict the khan's authorities and independence on a permanent basis. For this purpose, the *Zargo* was not subordinate to the regent anymore, that is, it ceased to be a part of the Khanate's state power system, and became an independent state body subordinated to the Russian state authorities. The status of the Kalmyk Khanate's head was made equal to a local administrative official's. The conclusion of the Foreign Affairs Collegium of July 5, 1764 confirms this: "the Khanate regent enjoys less authority among his people, and Kalmyk rulers, being subordinated to the Government [the *Zargo*—K.M.], have fewer grounds to be

afraid of his actions against them... but they can oppose him at the same time.”¹¹⁷

One cannot say that the policy of this kind was accidental or was conducted exclusively with respect to the Kalmyk Khanate. In fact, it was a part of the general ethnic policy carried out by the Russian Empire in the second half of the 18th century. It is well known that Russia launched an aggressive attack against the remainders of the Ukrainian political autonomy in the 1760s. The *hetman's* post was abolished in 1764; such all-Ukrainian enterprises as the Army Office and Court were canceled the next year. Moreover, the processes reflected the absolute monarchy's fundamental features of the time when the centralization and bureaucratic absolutism trends were prevailing.

The Foreign Affairs Collegium's report *About settling Kalmyks on the high bank of the Volga river near the tract known as Krymsky Zaton and about moving Astrakhan Cossacks to the same place* dated July 5, 1764 and sanctioned by Her Majesty was an important instrument that revealed the essence of Russia's ethnic policy in the second half of the 18th century, in particular, the policy towards the Kalmyk Khanate. The petition *About the Kalmyk owner Zamyay's request to settle down* was used as an official ground that Russia's policy towards Kalmyks. The Astrakhan governor, Major General N.A. Beketov, presented a report on the problem at an extended session of the Foreign Affairs Collegium upon the Empress' request.

The Foreign Affairs Collegium chaired by Nikita Ivanovich Panin examined whether it was advisable to make Kalmyks a settled people and formulated the state's stance with regard to Kalmyks, which was approved by Catherine II. As a result of the discussion, it was recognized that “it was not advisable to make the entire Kalmyk people settled at all” because Kalmyks “were not inclined to robbery or theft by their nature” and guarded the vast steppes of the Volga region as they were roaming there, “serving like a shield protecting boundary settlements against neighboring barbaric peoples.”¹¹⁸ Kalmyks served as a screen that prevented penetration of “Kyrgyz-Kaisaks” into the steppes of the Volga region or their alliance with Kuban Cossacks and mountain peoples. Moreover, being nomads, Kalmyks represented “an army that was always available and had already been used for our benefit during the Turkish wars.”

At the same time, the Foreign Affairs Collegium considered Kalmyks peaceful people that “strictly observed their ancient customs, and yet were somewhat lightheaded” and recommended that some of the Kalmyk lords and their people should become settled “for their propagation along the Volga banks from the Tsaritsyn region towards Astrakhan... and so as to

increase the strength of local irregular troops in the long run.”¹¹⁹ Keeping in mind mainly military objectives, the Collegium recommended that the seeming care about Kalmyks on that part of the state should be emphasized and they should be demonstrated that “they had their best profits” in the Russian allegiance. At the same time, it instructed to keep an eye on the moods among the people as to “prevent any grounds for hesitations.”

The Collegium recognized that when allowing the Khoshout *taisha* Zamyán to found a settlement, its purpose was experimental: to back up the trial settlement so as to make Kalmyks see the advantages of the settled way of life. However, the Collegium thought it premature to make Kalmyks settled on a large scale. They did not even intend to pay any salary to *taisha* Zamyán, who was to settle down, or to other *zaisangs*, except for judges from the *Zargo*. Despite the restriction, the Collegium thought it expedient to provide Kalmyks with the most convenient and suitable areas for their permanent residence.

Under an order issued by the Collegium, Zamyán was provided with “a tract on the higher bank of the Volga river, 60 *versts* upstream Astrakhan, opposite of the Krugly Island’s upper part, known as Krymsky Zaton,” where “there were plenty of meadows including hay meadows, and the Volga river’s current was quite different over there.” Moreover, the place was the most suitable one for Kyrgyz–Kaisaks to cross the river. Providing Zamyán with the plot of the land, authorities did not have to be concerned any longer about guarding the river crossing or maintaining an outpost over there. As an example of a settled way of life, authorities settled Cossacks down close to the Zamyán’s tract as well. Their key objective was “to be always ready for service.”¹²⁰

The Foreign Affairs Collegium introduced fundamental changes in the Kalmyk Khanate administrative system. First, the Collegium approved of a change in the *Zargo* institution status, which now became “a Kalmyk national government,” and degraded the regent’s role and status in the Khanate. Second, it introduced an extra branch in the Kalmyk administration of a local, horizontal level. The Foreign Affairs Collegium decided at the same session to transfer the Kalmyk Affairs Administration and military unit commander accredited at the body under the supervision of the Astrakhan governor, Major General N.A. Beketov, “to have some means at hand to keep the Kalmyk people in good order.”¹²¹

In connection with the measures that were undertaken in order to centralize the Kalmyk Khanate administration (reorganization of the *Zargo* already subordinated to central authorities and a transfer of the Kalmyk Affairs Administration and military unit under the control of the Astrakhan

governor), and to settle Kalmyks, and taking into account the ongoing policy aimed at using Kalmyks as a military force, the Foreign Affairs Collegium instructed all central and local authorities to be take special care in order "to prevent this people from understanding that all the aforesaid circumstances taken together can constitute a grave danger for them."¹²²

Thus, the goals pursued by the Russian Empire in its policy towards Kalmyks in the second half of the 18th century were these: to keep Kalmyks a part of the Russian state and make the Kalmyk Khanate a part of the common administration system at both central and local levels; to support their mainly roaming way of life as an important means to ensure security in the vast territories of the Volga steppes; to start settling a part of Kalmyks as an experiment to populate the Volga banks that were not or were poorly protected against attacks; to bring along an increase in the Kalmyk population with a purpose to help staff irregular troops, such as light cavalry, in the long run; to keep making Kalmyks an integral part of Russia by christianizing and settling the people.

Kalmyks continued to guard the southern border of Russia in the 1760s. A six-thousand Kalmyk cavalry unit along with Cossacks put an end to the Kuban Tatars' raids in the summer of 1765.

In addition to small, less than one-thousand strong, units, two large corps (20 thousand horsemen in each) took part in the Russo-Turkish War (1768–1774) starting in 1769. One of the corps was fighting as a part of the army under the command of General-in-Chief P.A. Rumyantsev, the other one was under the command of Regent Ubashi and Light Colonel I.A. Kishensky (who was in charge of supervision over the Kalmyk Khanate) and conducted military operations against the Kuban and Crimean Tatars. The mounted corps under the command of Regent Ubashi was transferred under the command of General de Medem in August 1770. However, due to a disagreement between the general and the regent, the latter returned to his Volga *uluses* under the pretext of remounting his cavalry in September 1770.¹²³

Christianizing the non-Russian population including Kalmyks was a part of the ethnic policy conducted by the Russian Empire. The official process of baptizing Kalmyks was launched almost as soon as they took allegiance. As shown above, *shert* instruments of the 1670s and 1690s stipulated that Kalmyks were entitled to become Orthodox Christians, and to settle down in Russian settlements and villages or found new settlements. Anyone had an opportunity to be baptized on a voluntary basis. Peter I's *ukase* of January 14, 1700 legitimized this principle.¹²⁴ Russia's official Christianization policy particularly revealed itself in the line and

activities pursued by the Senate, Synod, and in the formation of specialized state institutions (the Commission for Baptizing Nations of the Volga Region and the New Christianizing Office having state officials, preachers and a military unit at their disposal), as well as in the offers of material reward to those baptized and in their relief from punishment for any crimes they committed before Christianization.

Those Kalmyks that became Orthodox Christians, embraced a new ideology, and became Russian citizens were granted freedom from their lords. The Kalmyks leaving the Khanate for the Don river in 1696 and for Azov and Cherkassk in 1697–1698 were among the first to be baptized. As many as 5,282 Kalmyks (1,446 Kalmyk families) were baptized only in settlements of the Astrakhan *guberniya* by the middle of the 1730s. At the same time, the very first settlements of baptized Kalmyks were springing up in Chuguyev (*Kharkov guberniya*), Ural (*Yaik*), and Terek. In their new places of residence, the Kalmyks would join local Cossack units (the Ural Cossack Army and Mozdok Cossack Regiment) to perform patrol duties, escort mail, etc.¹²⁵

The fortress built on the left bank of the Volga river in 1739 and named Stavropol-upon-Volga (at present: Tolyatti) was the first large settlement of baptized Kalmyks. Princess Anna Taishina, the widow of Prince Peter Taishin (Ayuka's grandson), owned the fortress. Its population increased from 2,104 to 8,695 people by 1754. Princess Anna Taishina was in charge of the baptized Kalmyks; Colonel Zmeyev was appointed the fortress commandant. The fortress became a part of the Orenburg *guberniya* later. This development enhanced the migration of baptized Kalmyks to the *guberniya*.¹²⁶

Baptized Kalmyks that formed a majority of the population in the settlements achieved the status of Cossacks. The rest of them (depending on who they belonged to) were becoming either landowners' or church peasants, the latter becoming "economic peasants" after 1764. Thereby, ordinary Kalmyks leaving their lords and acquiring the Russian citizenship became serfs under the 1649 Code of Laws (Article 11, Provisions about Peasants). Baptized Kalmyks therefore were similar to Russian serfs: they would lose their rights and become objects rather than subjects of legal rights. They would be sold or bought by their owners.

In compliance with Peter I's *ukase* of 1688 that permitted selling peasants without land, Empress Anna Ioannovna signed an *ukase* on November 16, 1737, which allowed selling baptized Kalmyks as well. Empress Elizabeth Petrovna confirmed this document in 1744 and added that "they [baptized Kalmyks—*K.M.*] were equal to serfs."¹²⁷ When the document

was signed, selling, buying, and giving Kalmyks as gifts became widespread. As many as 186 Kalmyks were sold in the Astrakhan *guberniya* in a single year (1756–1757). The Bishop of the Monastery of Savior baptized 254 Kalmyks in 1758 and made them serfs at a fishery farm (*uchug*) belonging to the monastery.¹²⁸ As is well known, it was a period when serfdom was becoming tougher. Landlords were entitled to exile peasants to Siberia (1760). Peasants were prohibited to complain of their owners (1767). The law imposed no restrictions on landlords regarding corporal punishment of peasants.

Faced with the negative effect the conversion of Kalmyks to a different faith had on the nation's intellectual wealth and ethnic integrity, as well as on the political and economic status of the Khanate, the regents, khans, lords, and lamas opposed the process of Kalmyk Christianization and made attempts to return them to *uluses*. Some Kalmyks suffering from severe consequences of Christianization returned to the Khanate voluntarily. According to the Foreign Affairs Collegium, over one thousand families came back to the *uluses* by 1764.

When analyzing the reasons why baptized Kalmyks were returning to their *uluses* in his memorandum addressed to the Foreign Affairs Collegium, Astrakhan governor N.A. Beketov suggested that “the baptized Kalmyks should be left to live on their own, where they wanted, under the *ukases*.” Catherine II decreed the following on June 5, 1764, “You can let them do so but you must not publish it.”¹²⁹ N.A. Beketov was sure that such measures could reduce the outflow of Kalmyks from the Astrakhan *guberniya*. As a result, Kalmyks would become consolidated in Christianity and the provincial economy would see its recovery.

The attack against the Kalmyk Khanate's autonomy launched when absolutism, embedded as a form of government, concurred with the period when exchange relations promoting the increase in the agricultural industry in Russia started developing. In its turn, this required developing new territories. Moreover, Russia's territorial expansion in the 17–18th centuries coincided with an increase in population, in particular in the country's central part. The latter more than tripled from 1646 (7 million residents) to 1762 (23.2 million persons).¹³⁰ The economic development and growth of the country's population resulted in an intensive reclamation of steppe territories of the south, southeast, and Volga regions.

There were two ways for people to migrate to the Volga steppes: free colonization (spontaneous settling) or as a part of the official governmental colonization program initiated and regulated from the center. First of all, free persons, who could not get land plots in their native territories

because landlords owned the land, or who were leaving infertile lands in search of fertile ones, were migrating to the empty territories. Second, serfs fled to the steppes of the Volga region. Third, official authorities were moving officials and inviting foreign colonizers (for example, Germans, Serbs, etc.) over there, as well as selling or granting the lands for free to their grantees. Thus, they sold, donated, or allocated only to 22 landlords as much as 815,501 *dessiatinas* of the best lands in the 1760s including 175 thousand *dessiatinas* to Prince A.A. Bezborodko, 54 thousand *dessiatina* to Prince A.G. Potemkin, etc.¹³¹

Peasants and landlords colonized lower Volga steppe lands in the first half of the 18th century. The Tsaritsyn fortification line built in 1731–1732 initiated the restriction of the territory where Kalmyks were roaming. This prevented Kalmyks from going north, to the Don and Volga interstream area, where they used to roam freely in winter. More than one thousand families of Don Cossacks left the Don region and settled down between the Ilovlya and Volga rivers to guard the line.¹³² Permanent settlements of Russians (mainly from among peasants and landlords from the Penza and Simbirsk *uyezds*) were founded close to the Tsaritsyn fortification line as early as the beginning of the 1740s. Ukrainians and Russians started settling down on the left bank of the Volga river from Samara to Tsaritsyn in the 1750–1760s. Cossack *stanitsas*^v were emerging downstream on both of the Volga banks, from Kamyshin and Dubrovka. According to the ukase *About delimitation of lands allocated for foreign colonizers' settlements* issued by Catherine II on December 8, 1765, foreign colonies sprang up upstream and downstream of Saratov.¹³³

Since these territories were officially (they were even indicated on the Astrakhan *guberniya* map of 1766) a part of Kalmyk camping grounds (winter camping grounds: the upland steppes from the Tsaritsyn fortress to Terek; summer camping grounds: meadow steppes from the Caspian Sea shore to the land located in the left bank of the Volga River to the north of Saratov, as well as lands in the Kuma and Terek interstream area, downstream of the latter), the Kalmyk Khanate regent had to ask the Astrakhan governor N.A. Beketov why the settlements had to emerge in the Kalmyk steppes twice (in 1765 and 1766). The governor replied unambiguously: “under the crown order and based on the Manifest about general delimitation of lands all over Russia of September 19, 1765.”

Due to the complication of the situation in the Kalmyk steppe related to the land problem, upon the suggestion made by the head of the Kalmyk

^v Translator's note: *stanitsa*—a Cossack settlement.

Affairs Department, Light Colonel I.A. Kishensky and with the Empress' approval, the Foreign Affairs Collegium decided to delimit Kalmyk camping grounds and territories occupied by Russian settlements and foreign colonists. However, the central authorities failed to implement this, since Kalmyks began leaving Russia for Dzungaria.

There is no doubt that the Kalmyk steppe colonization resulted not only in the limitation of camping ground territories and aggravation of the Kalmyk people's economic situation, but also in the escalation of the political circumstances in the Kalmyk Khanate. However, on the one hand, it seems expedient to consider the problem of colonizing the Volga region territories as a sign of the objective capitalism generation process, but not as evidence of Russian great-power politics. On the other hand, colonization characterized by certain arbitrariness in the redistribution of the Volga region lands became an element of the great-power autocratic course. Meanwhile, it was desirable to make the land redistribution process well-regulated, with well-defined principles and mechanisms, and to introduce proper monitoring measures.

That is why we do not think that some historians are quite right when saying that the reason why a substantial part of Kalmyks left for Dzungaria in 1771 was that "the Kalmyk feudal lords changed their minds radically, in particular, those who were dissatisfied with colonization."¹³⁴ In general, many of the authors writing about Kalmyk history and touching upon the problem to a certain degree have seen both objective and subjective reasons for the development in question: the Kalmyk Khanate crisis, civil strife and struggle for power; Kalmyks were thinking about leaving on a permanent basis; the Dalai Lama's prophesy and an initiative of the chief Khanate lama, Luzang Jalching; colonization of the lands, aggravation of Kalmyks' economic situation and changes in their everyday and household life (meaning settling down); Kalmyks were often used during wars; Christianization of Kalmyks; restrictive policy pursued by Russia and rudeness of some commanders offending the regent's dignity.¹³⁵

Summarizing the aforesaid, we can conclude that Russia's great-power policy that was implemented via colonization, Christianization, restrictive policy, and relied on the "divide-and-rule" principle, that is, setting various forces against each other and unleashing civil strives between them, which worked very effectively with Kalmyk feudal lords. Combined, these were the main reasons why a substantial part of Kalmyks left for Dzungaria in 1771. In addition to depriving Kalmyks of their pasturelands and limiting the territory of Kalmyks' camping grounds, colonization re-

sulted in a shift in Kalmyks' habitual economic and household arrangements and led to aggravation of the economic status of all social groups within the Kalmyk population.

The policy of baptizing Kalmyks resulted in the loss of their traditional religion, in their acceptance of a strange ideology, and abandonment of their spiritual values that used to constitute the basis of their statehood. It also brought about diffusion and gradual assimilation of the people into an alien ethnic environment and the loss of their language. The restrictive policy in the Khanate administration system resulted in a change in the status of the Kalmyk political institutions and liquidation of the people's independent state and political life. The Khanate became a part of the general administrative system in Russia; the Kalmyk people started becoming Russian citizens, which implied that the legal statuses of people belonging to different estates were strictly regulated.

The divide-and-govern policy pursued by the tsarist administration as one of the most frequently used methods to implement the great-power chauvinism principle, which was disguised in the early 18th century but acquired an open form by the middle of the century (for example, Russians backed up Khoshout *taisha* Zamyán in his opposition to the incumbent regent in 1764), enhanced the internal struggle for power. The fact that some Kalmyks (*taisha* Zamyán's *ulus*) switched to a settled way of life and were engaged in economic activities tied to a particular territory, including agriculture, discredited Kalmyks as warriors, and, more importantly, it undermined the khan's unifying power. Making Kalmyks a part of Cossacks (who represented settled population and belonged to the military class) was a part of the politics.

Frequent involvement of human and material resources (saddle-horses and other cattle for food purposes as well as saddles, harnessry, outfit, and armament for soldiers at the expense of the local population) for military needs of Russia ruined the economy and undermined the gene pool of the Kalmyk people. As a matter of fact, the Kalmyk Khanate was attached to Russia by a single power institution, namely the military service based on recruitment. During the 120 years when it was a part of the Russian state, Kalmyks spent 80 years taking part in wars fought by Russia (as it is known, Russia was fighting for 114 years during the two centuries), not to mention participation in suppressing uprisings of a few peoples. The Kalmyks' involvement in suppressing Bashkirs, Crimean and Kuban Tatars, and mountain peoples set these peoples off against Kalmyks.

Speaking about "subjective" reasons for Kalmyks' mass departure, one should say that the "idea of exodus" was probably in the minds and hearts

of some *taishas* and could come true under certain circumstances. The favorable attitude towards and indirect encouragement of the idea on the part of the Tibet clergy along with Chinese authorities' secret agreement to render assistance to Kalmyks and allow them to enter the Chinese territory can be considered one of the subjective reasons as well.

Under the conditions when the great-power chauvinism gained strength, on the one hand, and there was a possibility to avoid ethnic annihilation on the other hand, Regent Ubashi and his closest circles decided to leave Russia and return to their historical motherland—Dzungaria—to preserve the Kalmyk people as an ethnos. One should not oversimplify the motivation of Kalmyks' leaving Russia by thinking that they aimed “to keep the patriarchal way of life and the Khanate autonomy” or that it was a result of some secret struggle for power and for feudal rights and privileges.¹³⁶ One can assume that Regent Ubashi realized that he was making a decision of vital importance for the Kalmyk people, for the territory of the former Dzungar Khanate had already become an integral part of China. We believe that it was not his decision to lead his people from Russia that constituted Ubashi's tragedy, but it was what happened *en route* because of the poor preparedness and insufficient assistance on the part of Chinese authorities that failed to keep their secret promises to provide security on the way and settle down Kalmyks in Dzungaria.

Regent Ubashi and his confederates—Tsebek-Dorzhi, Dashi-Donduk, and Luzang Jalching—started preparing their leave consciously and purposefully after the *Zargo's* reform and open opposition between *taisha* Zamyán and regent, that is, from the middle of the 1760s. Zamyán's letter to N.A. Beketov dated February 28, 1767 as well as his following reports (in the form of letters) confirm this. He informed N.A. Beketov in his messages about all suspicious actions on the part of the regent and his circle. In addition to Zamyán's messages, the Astrakhan governor was receiving information about preparations for leaving Russia from other sources. On the basis of available information, N.A. Beketov suggested that Colonel I.A. Kishensky and the Foreign Affairs Collegium conduct an investigation.

In reply to his report to the Collegium, two documents dated August 3, 1770—Foreign Affairs Collegium's rescript signed by its head, Prince N.I. Panin, and vice chancellor A.M. Golitsyn, as well as Empress Catherine II's *ukase*—followed. The documents recognized Kalmyks' services they had rendered to Russia and laid all the blame for the rumored preparations for leaving Russia on Zamyán. The Collegium and Empress refused to recognize any suspicions and turned N.A. Beketov's proposals down.

Meanwhile, the preparation for leaving Russia's territory was nearly over. A considerable part of Kalmyk *uluses* moved to the left bank of the Volga river; military force for their protection and large rearguard units were formed and given their assignments. Regent Ubashi declared to the army that they were going to leave for Dzungaria on January 3, 1771. As early as January 4–5, all the *uluses* located on the left bank of the Volga river started a long journey that lasted for seven months and resulted in great human casualties. Russian poet Sergey Yesenin reflected the Kalmyk people's movement in his well-known poem:

Just listen to the sound of carts...
In your dreams, can you hear this?
It was the night when thirty thousand
Kalmyk kibitkas
set off from Samara to Irgis.
Not to be slaves in their area,
Not to be oppressed as beasts –
This was their purpose.
Their carts were leaving for Dzungaria
Like a herd of wooden turtles.¹³⁷

The Kalmyks' movement to Dzungaria that began on January 5 took the tsarist administration by surprise. All attempts to stop Kalmyks that were made until the end of month were poorly organized and uncoordinated. The Foreign Affairs Collegium received a report about Kalmyks' leaving Russia after January 10 (it was sent on January 9). Measures that Orenburg governor I.A. Reinsdorp took to stop the leaving Kalmyks (sending Cossack units in pursuit of them and appeals to the Kazakh khan of the Junior Zhuz Nurali and Kazakh sultan of the Middle Zhuz Ablai) were in vain.

Much importance was attached to the Kalmyks' departure to Dzungaria (the Russo-Turkish War was in full swing, relations with Austria aggravated, and there was an uprising in Poland). That is why this issue became a special item on the agenda at a session of the Council accredited to Her Majesty's court. Empress Catherine II took part in the discussion. The Council resolved to spare no efforts to get Kalmyks back to the Volga.¹³⁸ The Council instructed the Foreign Affairs Collegium, the Military Collegium, and the administrations of Siberia, Orenburg, Astrakhan, and other towns as follows: "to spare no efforts whenever and wherever possible to search for the aforesaid Kalmyk rebels, defeat them everywhere, take them back, destroy their property, take away their cattle, and capture them."¹³⁹

However, measures taken by supreme authorities failed to stop Kalmyks and make them come back. Judging by the strong wordings found in the resolution of the supreme state power, one can assume what Kalmyks would face in the case of their return. If their leaving Russia was made equal to a revolt, they were going to be harshly punished. According to historians' estimates, over 70% of Kalmyks or 30,909 families left. Some researchers believe that only 11,198 *kibitkas*^{vi} stayed within the territory of Russia, and other scholars speculate that more than 13 thousand *kibitkas* remained (the 1771 census confirms the latter number). According to the 1775 census, there were 11,198 Kalmyk families in Russia.¹⁴⁰ According to Khan Donduk-Ombo's great-great-grandson, Alexey Dondukov-Korsakov, the number of *kibitkas* that left for Dzungaria was 73,016 (i.e., about 400 thousand people).¹⁴¹

Judging by the above-mentioned resolution adopted by Her Majesty's Council, one can assume that it was not the Kalmyk people's destiny that worried the tsarist administration, but the fact that it was about to lose the people that was protecting Russia's southern borders and represented a significant military contingent. The above-mentioned resolution confirms this. It reads, "is it possible that various peoples and tribes inhabiting the territory would take this opportunity now? Will they attack our borders thinking the borders are not properly protected?"¹⁴² The authorities were just as concerned about the fact that Russia was losing a considerable number of cattle and valuable agricultural raw materials. This probably served as a basis for Sergey Yesenin to put the following lines into the mouth of one character in his poem quoted above when he spoke about the Kalmyk exodus and making them come back:

...Tonight, like wild animals,
All Kalmyks as one
Betrayed the Russian empire,
They and their cattle have gone...
No, we cannot let them carry on
Incurring the damage on it!
Russia has lost the best stallions,
Russia has lost leather and meat...¹⁴³

When it became clear that it was impossible to bring Kalmyks back and they would not return, Empress Catherine II abolished the Kalmyk

^{vi} Translator's note: *kibitka*—a felt tent used by nomads, or a cart covered with cloth or leather, used as a moveable habitation. The word is also used to refer to a nomad family.

Khanate, its institutes, and higher official positions (khan and regent) by her *ukase* dated October 19, 1771. The Kalmyk Affairs Administration was dissolved earlier that year—in March. Under the *ukase*, the families that lost their owners (6,892 families) were distributed among the remaining *noyons* and owners (10) possessing 6,597 families. Thus, they had 13,489 families in their possession now.

Let us try to assess Regent Ubashi's actions aimed at taking a considerable part of Kalmyks to Dzungaria—not based on various ideologies or opportunistic trends, but in an objective way. As a result of a comprehensive and unbiased analysis of the event, taking into account the historic background of the period, Russian policy regarding Kalmyks and hard times the Kalmyk Khanate was enduring, we can conclude that the regent was driven by a higher goal—the preservation and survival of the ethnos—rather than by power struggle, as some historians alleged.¹⁴⁴ All of the previous assessments and conclusions were based on dubious historic sources. All those that reported about the Kalmyks' preparations to leave Russia were pursuing their own selfish goals: not merely to prevent the exodus, but to defame and depose the regent and win power. Officials receiving the reports (governors, representatives of local authorities, etc.) tried to back up the opposition, on the one hand, and maintain loyalty to the regent, in order to create a balance among the local authorities and thus make the situation more easily controllable on the other hand. In order to safeguard themselves from any responsibility for the Kalmyks' exodus, the officials had to put all the blame on Ubashi and defame him. Unfortunately, all documentary historic sources from the regent's office or environment, with the exception of several administrative letters written by the regent's relatives, were lost. Probably, Kalmyks took secret documents and archives with them. Thus, it is not accidental that some of our sources wrongly refer to Regent Ubashi as “flabby, narrow-minded” and “untalented.”¹⁴⁵ We are sure that only a gifted man devoted to his people could consolidate a majority of *taishas*, confidants and people, convince them of the need in exodus, prepare the march in strict secret, make the movement and security plan, and secure support among the Tibet senior clergy and Chinese leaders.

Unfortunately, Regent Ubashi's honorable intentions eventually led to a tragedy. The Kalmyk people split into two, divided by a huge distance, and suffered enormous losses during the exodus. The Kalmyks that remained in Russia lost their territorial unity by the early 20th century, residing in different regions of Russia. Those who made it to Dzungaria were settled in various parts of the Xinjiang province in China.

Notes

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- 2 *Soviet Encyclopedia of History*. Moscow, 1968. Vol. 11. 564; S.M. Solovyov. *Writings*. Moscow, 1992. *Book VI: History of Russia from the ancient period*. Vol. 11/12. 627; M.L. Kichikov. *Historic background...* 127; P.S. Preobrazhenskaya. *Op. cit.*, 69.
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- 15 *Mongol–Oirat laws as of 1640...* 43.
- 16 *Ibid.* 37.
- 17 *Ibid.* 39, 40.
- 18 *Ibid.* 37, 38.
- 19 *Ibid.* 39.
- 20 K.P. Shovunov. *Studies of the Kalmyk military history...* 45, 50.
- 21 *Mongol–Oirat laws as of 1640...* 61, 62.
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- 26 See: *Mongol–Oirat laws as of 1640...* 106, 135, 136.
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- 29 T.I. Belikov. *Kalmyks and their struggle for independence of our Motherland*. Elista, 1965. 27.
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- 34 *Studies of the history of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic*. 137–139; V.M. Bakunin. *Description of the Kalmyk peoples, in particular, Torgout people, and deeds of their khans and landlords*. *Writings*. 1761. Elista, 1995. 23, 24.
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- 36 *Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire*. Vol. 1. No. 540. 924. (Hereinafter: *CCL of the Russian Empire*.)
- 37 Ibid. 925.
- 38 Ibid.
- 39 M.M. Batmayev. Op. cit., 189; *Reader on the history of the USSR*. 3rd revised and enlarged edition. Moscow, 1949. Vol. 1: From the ancient times up to the late 17th century. 401, 404.
- 40 T.I. Belikov. Op. cit., 31–35.
- 41 *CCL of the Russian Empire*. Vol. 2. No. 672. 80, 81, and 84.
- 42 Ibid. 82.
- 43 N.N. Palmov. *Essays on the history of Kalmyks in the Volga region*. 12.
- 44 *CCL of the Russian Empire*. Vol. 2. No. 672. 82, 85.
- 45 Ibid. 84.
- 46 At the same time and according to the law, this concerned manorial and patrimonial lands. See: R.G. Abdulatipov, L.F. Boltenkova, Yu.F. Yarov. *Federalism in Russian history*. Moscow, 1992. Vol. 1. 89.
- 47 A.G. Mitirov. Op. cit., 100, 101; T.I. Belikov. Op. cit., 41–45.
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- 52 B.G. Pashkov. Op. cit., 355–356; T.I. Belikov. Op. cit., 48.
- 53 S.M. Solovyov. *Writings*. Moscow, 1991. *Book VII: History of Russia from the ancient period*. Vol. 14/14. 521; B.G. Pashkov. Op. cit., 356.

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- 137 S. Yesenin. *Collected works: in two volumes. Moscow, 1992. Vol. 1: Lyrics and poems.* 333.
- 138 See: *Studies of the history of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.* 216, 217. The “State Council” is mentioned here by mistake (it was established in the early 19th century).
- 139 A.G. Mitirov. *Op. cit.*, 269, 270.
- 140 N.N. Palmov. *Essays on the history...* 99.
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CHAPTER 3

Kalmykia's Status in the Russian Empire (Late 18th–Early 20th Centuries)

Gradual incorporation of Kalmykia into Russia's system of administrative and territorial control (last quarter of 18th–first half of 19th centuries)

When a substantial part of Kalmyks left for Dzungaria in late 1771, the political map of the Kalmyk steppe underwent fundamental changes. The abolishment of the Kalmyk Khanate meant the liquidation of the Kalmyk national statehood, and—to use contemporary terms—cancellation of Kalmykia's status of a constituent member of Russia. Kalmykia became a part of the Astrakhan *guberniya* and was under the Astrakhan governor's control. *Uluses* ceased to be independent and separate domains headed by their *noyons*, becoming *uyezds* instead. Endowed with administrative power, police officers appointed by the governor were in charge of maintaining order in *uluses*. Kalmykia became a part of the Russian common legal space during the period. According to the serfdom regulations, *ulus* lords preserved their independence in controlling their subjects. As in the case of patrimonial tribunal, the landlord was entitled to administer justice and impose punishments on his *ulus* people “based on... Kalmyk laws and customs.” In fact, the status of landlords (*noyons*) was equal to that of the noble class. Under this provision and the Russian inheritance law effective at the time, and based on the Kalmyk conventional law, the *ulus* property rights were inherited by the son from his father, passing into the state ownership in case of absence of direct heirs.

A special structural part of the Astrakhan governor's office—Kalmyk Affairs Expedition—was in charge of general control over Kalmyk affairs. The

judicial body—the *Zargo* (estate court similar to the high *zemstvo*ⁱ court and subordinated to the local administration)—was established in 1772. The *Zargo* comprised three *zaisangs* (one representative from the key *uluses*—Torgout, Derbet, and Khoshout) working on a regular professional basis. There were attempts to introduce elements of the principle of judicial independence. Apart from receiving an annual salary amounting to one hundred rubles, judges and their closest relatives were exempted from all fines that might be imposed by *zaisangs*. However, since the court was not separated from the state administration, the *Zargo* was not independent in practice and its resolutions would gain official force only after being approved by the governor. As we can see, the local authorities tried to combine the concept of separation of powers and the principle of absolute state control.

The *Zargo* conducted legal proceedings in compliance with the norms stipulated by the Great Code of Nomads, Donduk-Dashi's laws of 1758, and Kalmyk ancient traditions. Criminal cases between Kalmyks and neighboring people were resolved based on the Russian law.

Having put an end to the Russo-Turkish War (1768–1774) by signing a peace treaty, and having crushed the peasants' revolt led by Yemelyan Pugachev, the tsarist administration launched major reforms in the local administration and courts in 1775. On November 7, 1775, Catherine II published her manifest entitled *Institutions for administration of guberniyas in the Russian Empire*. The documents reflected two tendencies: centralization and decentralization of administration (“the whole can be in good order only when all its parts are in proper condition”). Under the reform, *guberniyas* were divided into smaller units; several *guberniyas* were consolidated under control of viceroys or governor-generals. In the course of the reform, the Caucasian viceroyalty that comprised the Caucasian and Astrakhan *guberniyas* including the territories of the nomad Kalmyks was formed in May 1785.

By an order issued in 1786 by Astrakhan governor P.S. Potemkin who simultaneously acted as the viceroy, the Kalmyk Army Chancellery was set up for managing Kalmyk affairs. The chancellery was in charge of administrative, police, financial, and economic issues, and was responsible for organizing military service in compliance with the new universal service law (1784). When, in 1788, the competences of the Kalmyk Army Chancellery were revised (it did not have to organize the universal military service), it was transformed into a “Kalmyk Chancellery” and moved under the governor's control, from Yenotayevsk to Astrakhan.¹

ⁱ Translator's note: *zemstvo*—a form of local self-government in the Russian countryside.

A general reorganization of the administration of Kalmyk affairs along with a judicial reform in Russia resulted in the dissolution of the *Zargo* in 1786. Its functions were transferred to Astrakhan *uyezd* courts that represented noblemen's courts of original jurisdiction.

When the Caucasian viceroyalty was abolished in 1796, the Astrakhan *guberniya* with the territory of the Caucasus as a part became an independent administrative-territorial entity with its own administration. The Kalmyk Board, similar in its structure to the units in charge of administration of the Caucasian peoples in the *guberniya*, was formed as a part of the Astrakhan *guberniya*'s administration, taking over the Kalmyk Chancellery in 1797. Apart from the Don Kalmyks, the Kalmyk Board controlled three groups of *uluses*—Torgout, Derbet, and Khoshout, that is, the total of 13,059 *kibitkas*, or approximately 60 thousand persons.

At the same time, a large group of Kalmyks (3,764 *kibitkas*, or 9,525 persons) led by Yekrem Khapchukov moved from Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* to the territories of the Don Army and were ranked as Cossacks in 1798. They were also known as Big Derbets. To introduce an administration for their affairs, Paul the First issued a nominative *ukase* dated February 16, 1799 that stipulated setting up a special Board at the Chancellery in the stead of the criminal investigation agency of the Don Army. According to the *ukase*, the Board would comprise the Great Derbet Horde's landlord along with two high-ranking officials.² The key objectives of the Board were the following: taking censuses of Kalmyks, settling disputes, complaints, and claims, and forming Kalmyk military units under their own commanders. The so-called established Kalmyks (up to five thousand people who had lived in the Don region for a long time), however, remained in their residence and beyond the Board's jurisdiction.

One year later, on August 11, 1800 Paul I signed another *ukase*. Now the Great Derbet Horde was declared independent and virtually acquired the status of Russia's constituent member. Under the tsar's order, Kalmyks from the Great Derbet Horde were to elect their chief. They became independent from the Don Cossacks and subordinate to the tsar directly. They were to conduct correspondence directly with the tsar, to address all issues to the Foreign Affairs Collegium as before, and to "address any land-related issues to the Prosecutor General."³

The owner of the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus*, Yekrem Khapchukov, died earlier, on July 18, 1800, and Paul the First approved Gabun-Sharap (his younger brother) as the *ulus* chief. Nearly at the same time, in August 1800, Astrakhan governor K.F. Knorring appointed Chuchei Tundutov the chief of the Maloderbetovsky *ulus* (Volga region) after the death of its chief, Babul.⁴

Subsequent two decrees issued by the tsar changed Kalmykia's legal status and initiated a new stage in the Kalmyk self-government and in the mutual relations with central authorities. After his audience with *ulus* representatives, Paul I examined the Kalmyks' situation, in particular the growth in the Kalmyk population and its economic potential, and apparently concluded that the Kalmyk problem was to be resolved at the level of the entire people, rather than at the level of individual *uluses*. We believe that the tsar's decision to unite of Kalmyk *uluses*, establish a supreme authority, and restore the inter-estate Kalmyk court subordinated to the central Russian authorities was also largely motivated by a human factor. Paul I wanted to follow the steps taken by Peter the Great that "restored the most ancient enactments of our forefathers."

By his gracious charter (which said "to approve of the previous Kalmyk rights") dated October 14, 1800, Paul I appointed Chuchei Tundutov, the Maloderbetovsky *ulus* landlord, the governor "in charge of the Kalmyk people under My Majesty's control" and defined the territory of Kalmykia within its former borders: "from Tsaritsyn and down to the rivers of Volga, Sarpa, Syal, Manych, Kuma, and then up to the highlands, as well as up to other places where your suburban people used to roam, with the exception of those people who hold the name title for their *uluses*."⁵

The same *ukase* established the Council for local administration and legal procedures accredited to the viceroy, a new *Zargo* that comprised eight people (civil and clergy men based on the principle of equal representation of *zaisangs* from *uluses*) receiving salary from the state, and included a Russian central authority representative with the casting vote right (collegiate councilor Makarov was appointed the representative). The new body took over the Kalmyk Board. In case of significant discrepancies in the *Zargo*, the debatable issue was subject for final settlement by the Foreign Affairs Collegium or even by the tsar in exceptional cases. In addition to the instructions from the central authorities, the *Zargo* was entitled to follow conventional rules and laws of the Kalmyk people.

The Kalmyk viceroy, who was appointed from among the local nobility in compliance with the stipulations of the Kalmyk inheritance law with regard to the delegation of power (from the father to the eldest son or the closest relative if there was no son), was provided with the same attributes of power as before: a banner, sword, and armor along with state gifts (sable fur coat and cap). Although the rights Kalmyks used to enjoy were restored, the attributes of power did not have the same importance as be-

fore. We can agree with N. Palvov, who wrote that “when appointing Chuchei the viceroy, the government failed to provide him with the full authority that Kalmyk khans used to have.”⁶

Tsar Paul I signed a Charter *On unrestricted exercising of all Kalmyk religious ceremonies* on the same day, October 14. Sobin-Bakshi was approved as the head of the Kalmyk clergy (lama). Senior clergy attributes (*baculus* and sable fur coat) were conferred on him. He was also granted an annual salary from the state, which was six times as high as that of a *Zargo* member. The Charter stipulated the lama's key authorities: “to comply with religious norms and to supervise over the faithful and diligent allegiance to Our Majesty.”⁷

Thus, we can assert with confidence that Emperor Paul I opened a new page in Kalmyk history by restoring its status as Russia's constituent member and a special region with a local government, yet subordinate to the central authorities. Kalmykia resumed its rights in accordance with the key principles for administering *guberniyas* stipulated in the *Guberniya's Institutions* of 1775, but the people's specific background and traditions along with their previous experience of self-government and relations with the central authorities were taken into account at that.

The organization of the administrative and territorial control over Kalmykia was similar to that in *guberniyas*: a specific territory was defined; the tsar appointed the viceroy accountable to him; the inter-estate court (*Zargo*) was a viceroy administration and was accredited to the viceroy; the tsar appointed the supreme clerical official, the Lama, who acted as a state official at the same time. Under the circumstance, possible restoration of the Kalmyk Khanate was a controversial matter⁸ because Kalmykia neither showed any signs of sovereignty, nor had a well-established state administration system that would enable Kalmykia to administer its internal affairs independently. Kalmykia, therefore, enjoyed the status of administrative autonomy rather than political autonomy.

Two nominative ukases issued by Tsar Alexander the First on October 26, 1801 and addressed to the Foreign Affairs Collegium and Lieutenant General Knorring failed to introduce any fundamental changes in Kalmykia's legal status: *About approving the rights and benefits provided to the Kalmyk people; about restoring the former status of Kalmykia independent from any Russian authorities except for the Collegium, in accordance with the rights provided to Kalmyk people*. However, control over the Kalmyk administration was intensified. The *ukases* largely confirmed Kalmykia's legal status of that was stipulated by Paul I.

Alexander I confirmed unambiguously that Kalmykia was to be subordinate directly to the Foreign Affairs Collegium. While Paul I's *ukases* entitled Kalmykia to apply to the tsar and he was the highest instance in relations with the central authorities, the *ukase* issued by Alexander I omitted the provision. Clause 2 of the *ukase* dated October 26 stipulated that "all relations regarding the Kalmyk people must return to the previous status in accordance with the rights they were entitled to, independent of any other authorities except for the State Foreign Affairs Collegium."⁹

Unlike in the previous period (the time of the khanate), another supplementary unit was introduced into Kalmykia's administrative system. The nominative *ukase* dated October 26 instructed Lieutenant General Knorring, Astrakhan governor, to take part in Kalmyk affairs "but only when they seek your assistance and patronage... and through your relations with the Foreign Affairs Collegium." At the same time, the *ukase* expressed confidence that the governor would "spare no effort to render assistance to the people to protect the privileges and rights provided to it."¹⁰ We can see that the governor's powers over Kalmykia were rather limited. Thus, the opinion shared by Russian historiographers that the Kalmyk viceroy was subordinate to the Astrakhan military governor during that period is ungrounded.¹¹ The actual state of affairs was, however, quite a different matter.

The contents of the two *ukases* in question can convince us of the fact that Kalmykia was a *guberniya* by its status, but a *guberniya* of specific nature. According to the nominative *ukase* issued by Alexander I to the Foreign Affairs Collegium in 1801, a position of Chief Police Officer "in charge of the entire Kalmyk people" with assistants (particular police officers in charge of *uluses*) was introduced into the Kalmyk government. Kalmyk adviser Makarov was appointed the Chief Police Officer in charge of other peoples under his control within the Astrakhan *guberniya*.¹² Being a senior official in Kalmykia, he served as a representative of central authorities (Foreign Affairs Collegium) with the right to participate in managing Kalmyk affairs and protect the interests of Kalmykia. The Chief Police Officer being a Russian high-ranking state official was a kind of intermediary between the central and local authorities, whose purpose was to strengthen the executive power (the viceroy's role and authority) and the vertical tsarist administrative authority in Kalmykia. The same *ukase* appointed collegiate councilor N.I. Strakhov the Chief Police Officer of Kalmykia. He took office in the middle of 1802.

As is known, the institution of police officers was introduced in the course of the reform of *guberniyas* of 1782. Their key duties included

maintaining public order and ensuring execution of laws. That is why the key goals of the Kalmyk Chief Police Officer and police officers were to consolidate the feudal ruling clique, and to supervise and take part in legal proceedings. Moreover, the Chief Police Officer and his assistants were to watch closely over processes taking place in the Kalmyk society and regularly inform the competent authorities about them.

It is very likely that Chief Police Officer N.I. Strakhov's permanent control, petty-minded meddling, and supervision over activities of the viceroy, the *Zargo* and its members caused dissatisfaction and irritation on their part. Because of the mutual distrust and hostility, both parties started filing complaints and appeals with recriminations to the central authorities. N.I. Strakhov applied to various authorities, including the Foreign Affairs Collegium, Vice-Chancellor Prince A.B. Kurakin, as well as Chief Governor of Georgia and Caucasia Prince P.D. Tsitsianov, suggesting the viceroy's position be abolished, the *Zargo* reorganized, and new legislation on the Kalmyk administration adopted. Mutual relations between the Chief Police Officer and the Kalmyk administration complicated the appointment of a Kalmyk viceroy after Chuchei Tundutov's death in 1803, deepened the split in the Kalmyk society, and affected the fundamental reorganization of the Kalmyk administrative system.

Taking into consideration the relations between the central authority's representative and the local Kalmyk authorities and in line with his general course towards the consolidation of autocracy, Alexander I followed the suggestion of the Foreign Affairs Collegium and signed a nominative *ukase* entitled *On the subordination of the Chief Police Officer in charge of the Kalmyk people and of their Zargo court to the Astrakhan governor* on October 26, 1803. The *ukase* ruled, "to improve the order in the Kalmyk people and to facilitate the prevention of frequent conflicts among them, I command to subordinate the Chief Police Officer in charge of the Kalmyk people and the Kalmyk court known as *Zargo*, supervised by the State Foreign Affairs Collegium, to the Astrakhan military governor based on the proximity to their nomad territories." All officials in charge of Kalmyk affairs were to apply to the central authorities only via the Astrakhan governor. In his turn, he was supposed to solve the most important problems only with the Foreign Affairs Collegium's consent.

The *ukase* failed to mention the Kalmyk viceroy's position: it simply omitted the matter altogether. Thus, the viceroy's office was practically abolished. In this connection, it was the tsar who was now approving of *ulus* landlords in consultation with the *Zargo*. Sandzhi Ubashi was approved as the Torgout Yandykovsky *ulus* landlord based on the nomina-

tive *ukase* dated October 19, 1803 issued by Alexander I.¹³ Erdeni-*taisha*, viceroy Chuchei Tundutov's son, was appointed the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus* landlord in 1805; Gabun-Sharap was appointed the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* landlord.¹⁴ The *Zargo* was gradually deprived of its administrative and management functions and became merely a judicial body with limited powers and in charge of civil-law cases only (with the amounts in dispute ranging from 5 to 25 rubles). As stipulated by the Russian law, *uyezd* courts, higher Zemsky courts, and the Astrakhan *guberniya* appellate court were dealing with more important civil-law cases and of criminal cases.

During the same period attempts were made to solve the territorial problem of Kalmyks taking into account the number of their population and cattle, as well as territories allotted to and distributed among the landlords and state settlers. Nominative *ukases* dated May 31 and June 12, 1803 instructed Saratov Civil Governor Belyayev and Chief Governor of Georgia and Caucasia Prince P.D. Tsitsianov to arrange and implement the allotting and assigning lands to Kalmyks in the Astrakhan and Saratov *guberniyas*. At the same time, the *ukases* laid particular emphasis on the need for Kalmyks to have access to Volga; the camping grounds between the Akhtuba and Volga rivers belonging to landlord Tyumen were to remain intact as well.¹⁵

According to the instruction, the Astrakhan military and civil authorities prepared a draft to manage the land of Kalmyks and other peoples roaming in the Volga region steppes, which was approved by Internal Affairs Minister V.P. Kochubei. The draft laid the basis for *Regulations on allotment of land to Kalmyks and other peoples roaming in the Astrakhan, Caucasian, and Saratov guberniyas* approved by Alexander I on May 19, 1806. The Regulations and appendices thereof were accepted as a regulatory legal act—the tsar's *ukase* entitled *On land allocation to Kalmyks and other peoples in the Astrakhan and Caucasian guberniyas*.¹⁶

The law entitled Kalmyks to use the upland and partially lower banks of the Volga river for their camping grounds. The enclosed general map demarcated the Kalmyks' "general camping grounds" on the upland bank of Volga in spring, summer, and autumn, featured country houses of landlords as well as Cossack and state settlers, and provided for corridors where Kalmyks could drive their cattle to watering places along Volga. Then the borderline of the Kalmyk territory ran along the Caspian Sea shore, the Kuma river up to the settlement of Vladimirovka, and further along Manych; it ran from Manych to the Don Army's lands, up to the settlements of Chapurniki and Tsatsa, the Saratov *guberniya*. The entire steppe inside the aforesaid

borders was intended for “unrestricted roaming.” Kalmyks were allowed to use the territory in line with their traditions.

The Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* was provided with lands beyond Manych, along Kalaus, up to Bolshoi Yegorlyk. Corridors for driving cattle to watering places were provided as well.

One of the *uluses* was allowed to move to the lower bank of the Volga river in the vicinity of Nikolskoye and Prishib settlements in early summer in turn. The territory up to Baskunchak Lake and further to the Khoshoutovsky *ulus* owner Tyumen's country house was allotted for camping grounds.

The *ukase* thoroughly regulated the procedure for Kalmyks' roaming in winter. They were allowed to occupy all free hollow areas and state lands on the Caspian seashore. As for wintering on the upper bank of the Volga river, Kalmyks were allowed to use floodplain territories instead of the steppe lands (cut-offs) from 10 to 15 *versts*.

Under the law, the territory of the Kalmyk Bazaar settlement along with the plots that the state had granted on lease in kind was provided to Kalmyks as well. The profit from the leased lands was to be paid to the Kalmyk Board.

Kalmyks were allowed to establish settlements and build houses and permanent buildings in the allotted territory.

In view of the growing number of Cossack troops in the early 19th century, authorities also turned their attention to Kalmyks residing densely in other regions. The tsar's nominative *ukase* issued to the Senate on April 21, 1803 moved the Chuguyev and Dolomanov Kalmyks (406 people recorded based on the audit results) roaming in the Mariupol *uyezd* to the Don Army's territory, ranked them as Cossacks and entitled them to serve along with Cossacks. At the same time, they were exempted from any state taxes or recruitment duty.

The Land Forces Minister's report entitled *On the establishment of the Stavropol Kalmyk army* of November 2, 1803 approved by His Majesty became another step in this direction. The report was dealing with the Kalmyks who had been moved to the Volga river upstream of Samara (during the construction of the Stavropol fortress) and baptized under Peter I's rule. The report said, “the Kalmyks showed diligence and loyalty during their settling in Stavropol, took part in missions against our enemies during the Prussian and Swedish wars, and guard the Orenburg line along with other peoples against Kyrgyz-Kaisaks now.” In this connection, the Minister suggested that “the Stavropol army be kept in the same status, meaning the territory and lands granted to it along with other privi-

leges regarding both internal procedures related to its economic administration and all previously granted rights, without any cancellation, and according to Charter 739 and Senate's *ukase* 745, provide it with the right to make other Kalmyks and their landlords members of their class and settle them down in the territories granted to the Army hereinafter."¹⁷

The internal structure and administration of the Stavropol Kalmyk regiment were reorganized in accordance with the Minister's suggestions. The administration remained a part of the Orenburg Cossack Army but as a separate regiment comprising up to one thousand persons. The military and civil administration was concentrated in the Army Office similar to the Cossack office and headed by the army *ataman* (chairman). The Army Board would appoint the latter upon propositions from the Orenburg Army Office. The Army Office staff included: two permanent members (staff officers) or advisers; one assessor elected every three years; office workers; a translator (14th rank officer); a secretary in charge of justice (14th rank officer) who was subordinated to the city prosecutor; two interpreters; and two paramedics. The General Regulations stipulated the status of all officers employed in the Office.

The Army Office was subordinated to a special inspector from the Orenburg Inspectorate on military issues; with regard to civil issues it was subordinated to the Simbirsk *guberniya* authorities (directly to the governor). The army *ataman*'s powers were restricted by these regulations. He was entitled to publish orders and execute them only when agreed with the Orenburg Army Inspectorate and approved by the Army Board.¹⁸

The Stavropol Cossack Army comprised 10 companies and 34 *uluses* after the reorganization conducted in the early 19th century. There were 185 families that comprised some 3,300 persons of both sexes (the population having increased by 1,535 persons since 1760).¹⁹

At the same time, the reorganization of the Don Kalmyks (3,907 families, or 13,326 persons) began. They were to follow all Cossack traditions. First of all, some territories were provided for camping grounds of all three Don *uluses* (Upper *ulus*: four *aimaks* (hundreds), Medium *ulus*: five *aimaks*, and Lower *aimaks*: four *aimaks*). The local administration system was regulated: *sotnik*,ⁱⁱ *pyatidesyatnik*,ⁱⁱⁱ and *khoton* officer elected from among officers or well-to-do Kalmyks at sessions of hundreds and *khotons*. All of the *uluses* were under direct command of the Kalmyk Board's Police Officer elected under the *Regulations of the procedure for*

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *sotnik*—the commander of a one-hundred unit of soldiers.

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *pyatidesyatnik*—the commander of fifty soldiers.

electing the oblast's military chiefs of 1819. The Police Officer was directly subordinated to the Don Army Administration. The reform aimed at incorporating the Don Kalmyks into the Cossack estate and into the Cossack administration system was completed in 1835.²⁰

Although the large-scale administration reforms were being carried out in the Kalmyk steppe and Kalmyk Cossack settlements, Kalmyks were still taking an active part in all military campaigns in the first quarter of the 19th century (six wars and one foreign campaign). The Don Kalmyk regiment under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Sysoyev, a Christianized Kalmyk, took part in the Battle of Austerlitz in 1805 as part of the Russian Army. The Stavropol Kalmyk regiment comprising 560 soldiers participated in the 1806–1807 Russian–French War as part of *ataman* M. Platov's cavalry. When assessing the regiment's contribution, *ataman* Platov reported, "Bashkirs and Kalmyks carried out their assignment with remarkable courage."²¹

At the same time, five Kalmyk regiments (the total number exceeding 2.5 thousand men and more than five thousand horses) were serving in the Caucasus fortification line under the command of General Bulgakov.²²

In addition to the above-mentioned Stavropol and Don Kalmyk regiments, two Astrakhan Kalmyk regiments operated as part of the Russian Army by the beginning of the Patriotic War of 1812. One of the Astrakhan regiments under the command of Prince Dzhamba-*taisha* Tundutov comprised 552 soldiers and 1,054 horses; the other regiment under the command of Serbedzhab Tyumen comprised 576 people and 576 horses. Moreover, up to 3.5 thousand of Don Kalmyks were fighting in different units of the Russian Army during the Patriotic War. The civilian Kalmyk population rendered substantial aid to the front as well. Kalmyks from the Kalmyk steppe alone sent a relief of more than 23.5 thousand rubles, 1,080 horses, and 1,100 cattle heads to the front aid fund during the Patriotic War.²³

Kalmyk regiments participated in a number of the large-scale battles of the Patriotic War (Borodino, Leipzig's Battle of the Peoples, etc.) and in the foreign campaign. On March 19, 1814, Kalmyk regiments No. 1 and 2 entered Paris along with the Russian Army's vanguard. The First Kalmyk Regiment returned to Kalmykia on January 3, 1815; the Second Regiment returned home on November 20, 1814. Only 734 soldiers (66.5%) out of the initial 1,104 members of the two regiments made it back home. Many Kalmyk soldiers were decorated with orders and medals for their courage and were promoted in ranks. As many as 216 Kalmyks received silver medals for capturing Paris. Commanders of the regiments D. Tundutov

and S. Tyumen were decorated with golden swords with an inscription "For bravery"²⁴ for their courage and "service rendered in battles against French troops."

The administrative reforms demonstrated that Russia kept seeking ways to improve the management of and define a legal status for Kalmykia in the Russian state. The state was also in search of forms and mechanisms of relations between Kalmyks, on the one hand, and the central and *guberniya* authorities, on the other hand. Certainly this pursuit that lasted until the 1820s was not accidental. It was rather a reaction to the exodus of a substantial part of Kalmyks from Russia and the abolition of their statehood. Moreover, there were other reasons, too, for example the Russian absolutism that tended to adapt all parts of the state apparatus (both central and local) to the changes happening in the country's public and economic system at the turn of the 19th century. The measures included reforms at all levels of the Siberian administration and of the administration of non-Russian peoples. The reform was completed in 1822.²⁵

The reform took into consideration the specific characteristics of the ethnic regions that, unlike central *guberniyas*, required other methods of administration and, consequently, a different administrative system. The specifics were determined by both national and local objectives springing from the needs of the central authorities. As far as the Kalmyk specific situation was concerned, it was largely determined by the need to have Kalmyk military units always ready for service (S.M. Solovyov wrote referring to Russian officers' opinion, "Kalmyks are better than any other irregular troops")²⁶ and by the need to increase the supply of the Kalmyk cattle to the Russian market, especially as capitalist relations were developing.

When preparing the administrative reform in Kalmykia, the tsarist administration had already had sufficient experience and ready blueprints for organizing administration in Russia's remote areas (regulations on the Siberian administration: "*General regulations on Siberian local administration*," "*General regulations on administration of the non-Russian peoples of Siberia*" and other documents approved by the Emperor in February 1822). That is why the "*Regulations on the Administration of the Kalmyk people*"²⁷ approved by the *ukase* of Alexander I on March 10, 1825 did not make a novel contribution into the administration reforms carried out in the 1820s.

According to the Regulations, Kalmykia was given a status of a Russian constituent member equal to *oblasts*—political units introduced in Russia in the course of the 1822 reform—and equal by its legal status to

an inner *oblast* incorporated into the Astrakhan *guberniya*. However, the Kalmyk *oblast* with its four-level administrative system (the chief, *oblast*, district and *ulus* administrations) was specific for its social structure, administrative traditions, and for a joint civil and military control in the territory exercised by the Astrakhan *guberniya* and the Caucasus *oblast* under the control of its military commander.

At a higher level the Kalmyk *oblast* was subordinated to the Russian Internal Affairs Ministry and directly to Minister V.S. Lanskoï.²⁸ In this case, the Ministry acted as the supreme administrative authority in the *oblast*—the highest part of the administration system. The Kalmyk *oblast* was directly subordinate to the Internal Affairs Ministry since the key objective of the latter was to take care of “the general well-being of the people.” In addition, governors were subordinate to it. That is why solving essential problems of the Kalmyk *oblast*—“general control over the well-being of the Kalmyk people,” protection of “its rights and interests,” as well as establishment or amendment of the *oblast*’s administrative system, division of *uluses*, settlement of disputes between *ulus* landlords and between Kalmyks and population from neighboring *guberniyas* and *oblasts* in the cases when the claim exceeded one thousand rubles, financing the administrative structure—was referred to the Internal Affairs Ministry’s scope.²⁹

Under the Regulations, the Chief Police Officer appointed and dismissed by the Internal Ministry upon the suggestion of the Chief Governor of Caucasia was the senior official in the Kalmyk *oblast*. As a direct representative of the Ministry in Kalmykia, the Chief Police Officer was subordinate to the Chief Governor in all matters related to the order, compliance with legislation and local judicial and military issues. In terms of other civil issues, he was subordinate to the Astrakhan governor. Because of the huge amount of work (“due to multiplicity of the Kalmyk Horde comprising over 25,000 families and due to the vast territories their camping grounds occupy”), two assistants to the Chief Police Officer were appointed.

The Internal Ministry ruled that the Chief Governor of Caucasia be responsible for the appointment, dismissal, and rotation of the rest of Kalmykia’s administration staff chaired by the Chief Police Officer, upon suggestions from the Astrakhan governor.

Under the Regulations of 1825, the Kalmyk Affairs Commission—a collegial institution headed by the Astrakhan governor—became the supreme body of the local (*oblast*) Kalmyk administration. Since the Kalmyk *oblast* formed a part of the Astrakhan *guberniya* in the administrative and territorial respect, issues of its control were allocated into a separate

group and the governor was put in charge of them. According to the Regulations, the Vice-Governor, the Chief Police Officer, the *guberniya*'s Prosecutor General, as well as a representative of *ulus* landlords and one representative of the Kalmyk nobility delegated through elections formed a part of the Kalmyk Affairs Commission. The administrative personnel of the Chief Police Officer were in charge of arranging the Commission's activities.

The Regulations provided for a rather wide range of powers for the Commission (except for criminal cases) and regulated its operation and administration procedures to minute details. By the nature of its powers and competence, the Commission was an executive administrative body acting as the superior court in charge of civil cases in the *oblast*'s territory at the same time. By solving administrative, economic, financial, and fiscal issues, it supervised over the proper processing of cases through the *Zargo*, the *oblast*'s court, and examined appeals against the *Zargo*'s resolutions on the cases amounts exceeded 400 rubles, and also complaints of *zaisangs* against the *Zargo*'s resolutions related to *aimak* administration and division of property. If we look at the Commission's membership and procedure of its formation (or, rather, the formation of one third of it), we can conclude—with certain reservations of course—that it had elements of an estate-representative body.

The Regulations clearly defined the relations between the Kalmyk Affairs Commission and the Chief Police Officer. In addition to the Internal Affairs Ministry, the Chief Governor of Caucasia and Astrakhan governor, the Chief Police Officer was accountable in his work to the Kalmyk Affairs Commission. He was to deliver a monthly report to the Ministry about the situation in Kalmykia, the steps he took and the process of settlement of complicated and vexed problems in the Kalmyk Affairs Commission. It was mandatory for him to visit Kalmyk camping grounds in person at least once a year to settle the problems and later inform the Commission on the activities carried out in *uluses* and camping grounds.

The Chief Police Officer was to submit issues demanding collegial resolutions for the Commission's consideration. In his correspondence regarding examined cases, he was to refer to resolutions adopted by the Commission. The Kalmyk Affairs Commission was entitled to audit the Chief Police Officer's work at any time, to listen to him, to adopt a resolution, and to report to the Internal Affairs Ministry and to the Chief Governor of Caucasia.

The imperial *ukase* issued by Alexander I on March 9, 1825 instructed the Kalmyk Affairs Commission to analyze the effective Kalmyk legislation

jointly with *ulus* landlords and clergy representatives and to elaborate new legal provisions that would be in line with the actual situation in Kalmykia, the epoch, and the Russian laws. Obviously, the key objective of the *ukase* was to incorporate the local legislation into the country's common legislative space. It was suggested that genealogical books of *noyons*, landlords, *zaisangs*, and clergy be compiled, and a preliminary census of families by *uluses* be carried out. The information was required to incorporate the Kalmyk population into Russia's common estate system. The Commission was charged with a very important task (both from the social and political point of view): to examine the relations among Kalmyk landlords, *zaisangs*, common people, and clergy, in particular the impact of the latter on all of them, and to assess the degree of common people's dependence on their landlords and relations between the two groups. This information would enable the authorities to identify the level of the Kalmyk social development, as well as social and political situation in the society.

The 1825 Regulations charged the *Zargo* with authority functions in the *oblast*. The *Zargo* was an inter-estate judicial body (with a noble membership though) comprising eight members (two from the clergy and six from landlords and *zaisangs*—by the number of *uluses*) elected in *uluses* for the term of three years and approved as members of the court by the Kalmyk Affairs Commission. Judicial proceedings were to be carried out in accordance with Kalmyk laws and common law norms. The *Zargo* was the highest appellation instance in relation to lower (*ulus*) courts. However, in fact the *Zargo* worked under control of the executive body since one of the special assistants to the Chief Police Officer assisted the *Zargo* in its activities, and one of his translators was keeping records.

The *Zargo* was examining civil cases of three categories: estate (feudal) cases—disputes and quarrels between *ulus* landlords and in connection with estates, as well as cases of *zaisangs* related to the administration of *aimaks* (with the amount in dispute exceeding 200 rubles); inter-estate cases—civil cases with the amount in dispute from 200 to 400 rubles (it was possible to appeal resolutions on such cases with the Kalmyk Affairs Commission for a year); crimes involving property—thefts of cattle or other property, stealing, frauds for the amount up to 400 rubles but for no more than three times, absence, escape or unwarranted transfer of Kalmyks from one landlord to another. Criminal cases were subject to review by relevant Russian courts based on the Russian legislation.

This regulatory and legal document classified criminal offenses for the first time in Kalmykia: treason (however, it was not clear what kind of

treason it involved); disobedience of authority; revolt (uprising); attempt to flee abroad with evil intentions or jointly with criminals; murder; robbery, violence, and deliberate provoking of others (criminals) to commit such actions; making counterfeit money; theft committed more than three times. Moreover, the Regulations separated civilian and clerical courts for the first time as well. The latter was in charge of cases related to religion and crimes involving religion, clergy, and families.

According to the Regulations, *ulus* administrations with landlords in their *uluses* and rulers in state *uluses* at the head formed the lower part of the Kalmyk administrative system. *Ulus* administrations were in charge of internal affairs (mainly everyday routine matters)—regulating relations between subordinates and subjects and minor crimes beyond the scope of criminal offences.

Local police officers in charge of administrative and police supervision, as well as judicial supervision, formed a part of *ulus* administrations. Local police officers represented the superior agency—the Chief Police Officer—and were not entitled to interfere with everyday and current activities of *ulus* administrations and *ulus* courts. Their major duty was to maintain public order and peace in the *ulus*. They were entitled to take offenders into custody, conduct investigation, take the case and the guilty to judicial organs; supervise over all *ulus* bodies without interfering in their activities; supervise over discharge of duties, payment of fees, and the border service assignments. Local police officers were to be informed about the situation in all spheres of *ulus* life and keep themselves abreast of what was going on, and report the Chief Police Officer on all this. In addition, local police officers were entitled to adopt resolutions on minor legal cases of civil nature for the amount in dispute not exceeding 200 rubles.

Ulus courts of the interclass nature examined cases related to disputes and personal injuries. Members of *ulus* courts were elected from among representatives of *zaisangs* and honorary people for one year. *Ulus* courts dealt with cases in which the disputed amount did not exceed 200 rubles or in which neither party had claims to the court or to one another. *Ulus* courts were entitled to adopt resolutions related to offences, crimes, or thefts committed less than three times, but only by the consent of the landlord, ruler, or the local police officer. In some cases, *ulus* courts were allowed to examine cases with the amount in dispute exceeding 200 rubles, but the accused person was entitled to appeal the resolution with the *Zargo* within a year. Judicial proceedings in *ulus* courts were carried out based on ancient Kalmyk laws (Steppe Code of 1640, Khan Donduk-

Dashi's law of 1758, etc.), legal practice, and in accordance with the new provisions of the criminal and civil law.³⁰

Thus, when the status of Kalmykia as a Russian subject was restored in the early 1800s, Kalmykia was reorganized in compliance with the founding principles of the administrative reform that had been implemented in the Siberian national administration and in the administration of non-Russian peoples. As a result, a significant step was made in implementing the goal set by the Regulations—"to incorporate Kalmyks gradually into the civil administration"³¹ of the country. Kalmykia joined the country's common administrative and territorial system with the rights of a special *oblast* in the Astrakhan *guberniya*. Taking into account the specific features of Kalmykia and common objectives of the Russian reform (centralization of administration), the 1825 Regulations defined its legal status as an entity with a specific organizational and administrative structure and with a network of the *oblast*-level and local institutions whose powers and competences were derived from the country's central authorities, the *guberniya*'s (civil) authorities, and the (military) authorities of the Caucasus. Therefore, the Regulations stipulated legal foundations for Kalmykia's relations with Russia's state authorities, the Astrakhan *guberniya* and the Caucasus *oblast*. Having subordinated the Kalmyk *oblast* to the Internal Affairs Ministry and to a large territorial military authority (Chief Governor), the tsarist administration virtually introduced a military-administrative form of government in the *oblast*.

In addition to the common law, the 1825 Regulations laid the foundation for a new legal system in Kalmykia (administrative law, civil law, criminal law, and procedural law) and defined a system of judicial bodies which had a touch of local specifics but generally fell into the pattern of the common Russian legislative and judicial space at the same time.

The fact that the Regulations failed to define the status of the lower unit of Kalmyk administration—the *aimak* administration that represented the center of social relations—was the key disadvantage of the Regulations. Common people were absolutely ruled out of the process of the internal administration and were not even considered subjects of law. The status of Kalmyk social estates was not regulated either.

The ten-year period of Kalmykia being under control of two administrative and territorial authorities (Astrakhan *guberniya* and Caucasus *oblast*) also revealed the expediency of integrating the *oblast* into the common political and social system of Russia as an independent administrative and territorial unit with more control over its affairs on the part of the central authorities. The historical traditions of Kalmyk statehood,

court organization, and judicial proceeding, and the *oblast's* economic conditions were taken into consideration. However, the transformation of the Kalmyk *oblast* administration in the early 1830s was largely influenced by tendencies typical of the epoch of Nicholas the First: the centralization of power, bureaucratization of the administrative apparatus, and the crucial role of bureaucracy unquestioningly obedient to the tsar.

For these purposes, a new document was approved to change the status of Kalmykia and its administrative system. This statutory legal act was entitled *Regulations on the Administration of the Kalmyk People*.³² It was passed by the State Council and approved by Tsar Nicholas I on November 24, 1835 (published on December 28, 1835). The tsar's decree emphasized the need to publish the Regulations in two languages—in Russian and Kalmyk.

The Regulations introduced a fundamental change into Kalmykia's legal status. From that time on, it was an independent *oblast* (an entity that did not belong in any other administrative and territorial units), under direct control of the Russian Internal Affairs Ministry (Minister D.N. Bludov), while the local control was entrusted to an official authorized by the Minister (Astrakhan military governor). The Regulations emphasized, "A special department independent of the *guberniya's* administration is to be established for the Kalmyk people roaming in the Astrakhan *guberniya* and Caucasus *oblast*."

In accordance with the Regulations, a separate and independent system of the *oblast's* and local administration was established which was not a part of the *guberniya's* system. Since the Astrakhan military governor was ruling not as a governor but rather as a representative of the Internal Affairs Ministry, he was endowed with full authority in the Kalmyk *oblast* and was "the senior and direct chief for all places and persons subject to the local, higher and *ulus*-level control over the Kalmyk people." That was why a special office (department) was established in the Astrakhan military governor's chancellery to deal with cases related to the Kalmyk people.

The Astrakhan military governor, who was a higher official in Kalmykia representing the Internal Affairs Ministry, exercised supreme authority. The list of his key duties included control over the fulfillment of obligations stipulated by the Regulations by officials, *noyons*, *zaisangs*, officers of all ranks, as well as supervision over the processes in departments and public order. He had the right to conduct a personal inspection or organize an inspection, to examine the situation in the *oblast*, in separate branches or administrative units, and in *uluses*. In fact, personnel is-

sues (appointment, displacement of personnel of all levels, recommendations for a decoration) were in his charge (he made decisions about recommending or not recommending people, and about giving testimonials). The key objective of all of his activities was to promote the conversion of Kalmyks to a settled way of life and farming.

Control over record keeping in the *oblast's* institutions as well as accuracy of decisions taken by the *Zargo* played an important role in the military governor's activity (as he was a higher official in Kalmykia). If a decision taken by the Court complied with the legal requirements and was duly documented, he would give his consent for its execution. In case of his non-agreement, he was to forward his conclusion to the Governing Senate. Moreover, he was the one to say the last word in the decision-making process concerning awarding clerical ranks to clergy.

The Regulations strictly defined mutual relations between the Astrakhan military governor and Internal Affairs Ministry, and between the Astrakhan military governor and the Kalmyk *oblast*-level and local officials. The military governor was subordinate to the Ministry in all his actions related to Kalmyk issues and was to report on the financial situation in the *oblast* and about his work on an annual basis. He was entitled to put forward proposals to the Chief Guardian, the Kalmyk Administrative Council, the *Zargo* and *ulus* courts, and to give instructions to *ulus* guardians.”³³

In case of the military governor's absence for any reasons, all his duties and powers were delegated to the Astrakhan civil governor.

The next rank (following the Astrakhan military governor) in the Kalmyk administrative system was the Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people, who also chaired a collegial body named Kalmyk Administrative Council. The tsar appointed the Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people from among the list of Russian officials recommended by the Minister of Internal Affairs. The staff of his administrative apparatus comprised ten people and two assistants, another 22 people working in *uluses* under his supervision. It was an important bureaucratic service covering many spheres of life and society. The Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people was subordinate to the Astrakhan military governor and was under his control.

The Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people was to perform supervisory functions, especially in the field of public order, duly payment of tax levies, and other duties of the *oblast's* population. He was also in charge of organizing public services and amenities. The Chief Guardian's duties included supervising the work of institutions and officials at all levels (both secular and clerical). According to the *Regulations on the procedure*

of promoting civil officials in ranks (1834), he conducted certification of officials from the *oblast* and *uluses* and reported on certification results to the military governor on an annual basis.

The guardian service chaired by the Chief Guardian was mainly in charge of economic and social issues: it was to examine the situation and take measures for developing economy and public health service in *uluses*. Under extraordinary circumstances (natural disasters or epidemics), the service was to take urgent measures to provide people with food and medical care, and to deliver fodder for the cattle. Although the Chief Guardian and *ulus* guardians supervised courts, they did not interfere with their activities related to criminal cases. However, the Chief Guardian was to organize protection for Kalmyks charged with criminal offences in Russian public offices.³⁴

The Kalmyk Administrative Council played an important part in the system of the *oblast*'s higher administration agencies. It comprised the following officials (by virtue of their positions): the Chief Guardian (chairman of the Council); two deputies (assistants to the Chief Guardian) appointed by the Internal Affairs Ministry; a secretary and a treasurer appointed by the Astrakhan military governor; an assessor elected from among *noyons* for a period of three years; two representatives elected from among *zaisangs* for the same period. The Astrakhan military governor approved the assessor and representatives in their positions. The headcount of the Council's staff including auxiliary personnel was 18 persons. By the nature of its jurisdiction and powers, the Council was an executive and regulatory agency; by membership and form of its organization it belonged to estate-representative authorities.

The Regulations defined the Council's powers in much detail and regulated its operation including the procedures for the examination and processing of cases. The Council paid much attention to economic, financial, fiscal, and commercial issues; it supervised and controlled activities of the *ulus* institutions including the police, *noyons*, landlords, and *ulus* rulers. It also determined the number of clerical people in each *khurul* and presented them to the Internal Affairs Ministry through the military governor for approval. When necessary, it was entitled to launch investigations based on criminal cases of special importance such as banditry, robbery, serious rustling, murder, etc. and to ensure the execution of the sentences passed by the *Zargo* for such offences. The Council was entitled to levy taxes from the state-owned and landlords' *uluses*, recover penalties, and ensure their purposeful expenditure. In financial and judicial matters the Council was accountable to the Astrakhan military governor.

The Regulations stipulated that documents processed in the Kalmyk Administrative Council were to be in Russian with a mandatory Kalmyk translation. The *guberniya*'s prosecutor monitored the quality and legitimacy of decrees issued by the Council. The Russian law (General Regulations) governed activities of the Council and its chairman, who were subordinate to the Astrakhan military governor authorized by the Internal Affairs Ministry.³⁵

According to the 1835 Regulations, the *Zargo* was the higher judicial body in Kalmykia. It examined civil, criminal, and domestic proceedings. In its status it was virtually equal to the *guberniya*'s chamber, criminal, and civil court (after the reform of 1797). It comprised the chairman appointed from among Russian officials upon a recommendation of the Minister of Justice; two advisers appointed by the Ministry of Justice from among Russian officials upon a recommendation of the Astrakhan military governor; two assessors elected from among *noyons* for a period of three years and approved by the military governor. The personnel list of the *Zargo* included 17 persons. By its membership it was an estate court. However, by the nature of issues it regulated it was an inter-estate court.

The *Zargo* was the higher instance for criminal and civil cases in Kalmykia. Its resolutions on criminal and civil cases could be appealed only to the Governing Senate. Resolutions of the *Zargo* were to be approved by the Astrakhan military governor. The Kalmyk Administrative Council was in charge of the execution of the court's resolutions. The *Zargo* could examine criminal cases only when they came from *ulus* courts in the appellation procedure or had a resolution of the military governor.

When examining criminal cases, the *Zargo* was guided by the Russian legislation, while it would go by the traditional Kalmyk laws (the 1640 Great Code of the Nomads, Donduk-Dashi's laws of 1758, and common law) when dealing with civil cases. Judicial proceedings were conducted in the Russian language with a translation into Kalmyk when necessary.³⁶

While the over-bureaucratized form of administration was consolidating, the political independence of the Kalmyk church and clergy was becoming noticeably restricted. There were 105 *khuruls* and 5,270 clerics at that time.³⁷ The lamaist clerical administration combining functions of a clerical and state institution for religious affairs was a unique *khurul* administrative apparatus in Kalmykia. It comprised the lama (chairman) appointed by the tsar from among the Kalmyk clergy upon the Internal Af-

fairs Minister's recommendation (the first Lama Dzhimbe-Gabung Namkayev was appointed on June 15, 1836) and four members elected at a general assembly of the Kalmyk clergy (*bagshis* and *gelyungs*) for a three-year term and approved by the Astrakhan military governor. All officials from clerical bodies were also state officials by their status and received annual salaries: the lama got 2,550 rubles and each member obtained 750 rubles. In fact, the lama was equal by its status to a bishop and was appointed by the tsar.

The clerical administration was in charge of personnel issues: appointing *bagshis*, *gebkois*, *gelyungs*, *dge-tshuls*, and *mandzhiks*, conferring appropriate clerical ranks on them. Dismissals and revocations of holy orders were carried out upon the Astrakhan military governor's authorization. The clerical administration was performing supervisory functions over the actions and behavior of clergymen, as well as functions of a clerical court: it would try clergymen that committed an offence, examine cases on the wrong conferment of a clerical rank, and try laymen in some categories of civil cases such as family cases. Materials on cases of criminal offence committed by clergymen and on property disputes were to be submitted to the Kalmyk Administrative Council (to be further submitted to the *ulus* court or to the *Zargo*). The administration exercised control over the inflow and accuracy of spending funds and donations in *khuruls*.

The clerical administration was practically under the control of the tsarist administration. The Regulations banned clergymen from interfering with civil cases, from rendering assistance to common people with compiling letters or other documents, and from leaving *khuruls* without a written permission. Decisions taken by the Lamaist clerical administration were executed by the Kalmyk Administrative Council. If there was a controversy or disputes, the case would be submitted to the Astrakhan military governor for final resolution. As a unit in the Kalmyk administrative apparatus, the administration was directly subordinate to the Astrakhan military governor and the Kalmyk Administrative Council on the local level, and was accountable to the Internal Affairs Ministry on an annual basis.³⁸

Apart from the *oblast's* authorities, the Regulations of 1835 set up the *ulus*, *aimak*, and *khoton* authorities, that is a whole system that complied with the new administrative and territorial arrangement. Under the Regulations, Kalmykia was subdivided into seven *uluses* (Bagatsokhurovsky, Erketenevsky, Khoshoutovsky, Maloderbetovsky, Bolshederbetovsky, Yandykovsky, Kharakhusovsky), which were subdivided into *aimaks*, the latter divided into *khotons* in their turn. The *ulus* administration comprised

1) five landlord's *uluses* (Khoshoutovsky, Maloderbetovsky, Bolshederbetovsky, Yandykovsky and Kharakhusovsky)—*noyons* as landlords and in two state ones (Bagatsokhurovsky and Erketenevsky)—rulers; 2) *ulus* courts; 3) *ulus* guardians and their assistants. Moreover, keepers were appointed for the Kalmyk Bazaar in Mochagi. *Aimaks* were under control of *zaisangs* and *khotons*—under control of elders elected from among trustworthy Kalmyks.

Rulers of a state *ulus* would be elected by the Council comprising *noyons* that had no *uluses* and honorary *zaisangs* from the *ulus* in question, for a term of three years, and were to be approved by the Astrakhan military governor upon an authorization from the Internal Affairs Ministry. It was the first time when the Regulations stipulated in detail the powers, rights, and obligations of the *ulus noyons*-landlords, *ulus* rulers, *aimak zaisangs*, and *khoton* elders, who were supposed to take care of the welfare of dependent Kalmyks. One of the primary functions of rulers and *noyons*-landlords was to ensure public order and peace in subordinate *uluses*, as well as to ensure the timely tax collection in full. *Noyons*-landlords, rulers, *zaisangs*, and elders were to exercise strict control over the use of the camping ground territories, especially with regard to accurate observation of the camping ground boundaries. Besides, they were to examine and be aware of the social and political situation in the territories they were in charge of.

In addition to all other duties and powers, a *noyon*-landlord had judicial functions as well. He was entitled to examine and take a final decision for minor civil cases (disputes, offence, etc.) in compliance with the common law and Kalmyk legislation. These Regulations reflected attempts made by Nicholas I to solve the peasant problem at least in part. All rulers, owners of *uluses*, *aimaks*, and *khotons* were strictly banned from selling, impawning, or giving away their subordinate Kalmyks to anyone. At the same time, the Regulations enhanced the control over common people and restricted their rights of movement (within 500 *versts* from the camping ground—by the *zaisang*'s consent, and over 500 *versts*—by the consent of the *noyon*-landlord or *ulus* ruler). It was also prohibited to leave the *khoton* for more than two days without the elder's consent, while persons considered unreliable were banned from leaving the camping ground at all.

Ulus courts belonged to the first-instance judicial authorities that had investigation powers and would deal with criminal (theft for the amount from 5 to 20 rubles), civil, and trusteeship cases. An *ulus* court comprised a *noyon*-landlord or *ulus* ruler (chairman); *ulus* guardian and assistant; two

lay judges elected from among *zaisangs* for a three-year term, and approved for the office by the military governor. The section on *ulus* courts stipulated the entire judicial proceeding process in much detail. The process was to comply with the instruction developed by the military governor and approved by Internal Affairs Ministry and Ministry of Justice. Civil and trusteeship cases were to be processed in accordance with the Kalmyk laws, while criminal, inquisitional, legal, and political cases were investigated in accordance with norms of the Russian legislation. Legal proceedings were carried out in the Russian language with mandatory translation into Kalmyk.

Ulus courts initiated proceedings as advised by the Kalmyk Administrative Council, the *Zargo*, the *ulus* guardian and private persons. *Ulus* courts could settle minor disputes with the help of a mediator selected by the parties in dispute. According to the *Regulations on arbitration courts* approved by the tsar on April 15, 1831, the mediator's resolution was deemed to be final.

Ulus courts were entitled to provide the inventory and assessment of the respondent party's property and—when necessary—sell the attached property (if it did not exceed 200 rubles; if its cost exceeded the aforesaid amount, the property would be sold through the Kalmyk Administrative Council). *Ulus* courts were directly accountable to the Kalmyk Administrative Council and were to deliver annual reports on financial expenses, and monthly reports on the cases under investigation and persons detained.

The *ulus* guardian, who exercised both administrative, police, and investigating functions, was an essential actor in the *ulus* administration. The *ulus* guardian would be appointed by the Internal Affairs Ministry upon the Astrakhan military governor's recommendation. Without interfering with the powers of *noyons*-landlords and *ulus* rulers, he would monitor public order, record the *ulus* population by estates, and superintend to the *ulus* court's operation. To perform police functions, the *ulus* guardian had a team staffed from among Cossacks from the Astrakhan Cossack Army and Kalmyks as instructed by the Astrakhan military governor.

The *ulus* guardian exercised strict control over the accuracy of tax calculation and collection, and performance of various duties established by the aforesaid Regulations (Chapter XIII, *On the duties of Kalmyks*). The annual collection fees and recruitment for the frontier service in *uluses* were fixed by *noyons*-landlords and rulers as agreed upon with *ulus* guardians. Kalmyks from landlords' and state *uluses* were to pay 28.5 rubles per *kibitka* every year, serve as frontier guards, and provide a wagon

for the *ulus* administration (the required annual number of wagons being approved by the Internal Affairs Ministry). In landlord's *uluses*, the collection fees per *kibitka* were distributed as follows: 2 rubles per *kibitka*—to *zaisangs* and *aimak* rulers, 25 rubles per *kibitka*—in favor of the *noyon*-landlord, 1.5 rubles per *kibitka*—for the maintenance of the Kalmyk Administrative Council and schools; in state *uluses*, it was distributed as follows: 2 rubles per *kibitka*—to *zaisangs* and *aimak* rulers, and the remaining amount (26.5 rubles per *kibitka*)—for the maintenance of the Kalmyk Administrative Council and schools.

The guardian's service would see into proper compliance with the established camping order in *uluses*, into Kalmyks' staying within the boundaries of specific territories, and into clergymen's non-interference with civil cases. It is clear from the section about *ulus* guardians' authorities and functions that the guardian played an important role in the *ulus* administration. Keepers in the Kalmyk Bazaar (a settlement close to Astrakhan) and in Mochagi (a few coastal districts) had similar powers. *Ulus* guardians and keepers were directly subordinate to the Chief Guardian, and in some matters including judicial issues—to the Kalmyk Administrative Council and the Astrakhan military governor (for issues related to public order).³⁹

Another reason why the Regulations were a consequential document was that it defined the social structure of the Kalmyk social system, which comprised the following estates: feudal *noyons* (landlords), ancestral *zaisangs* (both possessing and not possessing *aimaks*), clergy (lamas, *bagshis*, *gebkois*, *gelyungs*, *dge-tshuls*, *mandzhiks*), feudal dependent persons (common people—common Kalmyks). The Regulations defined the special status of *noyons*, *zaisangs*, and higher clergy. They had the right to elect and be elected to the authorities of all levels. This category also comprised direct relatives of *noyons*.

The Regulations placed *noyons* and *zaisangs* who received ranks of the eighth class in civil service or officer ranks or those who were awarded with orders among Russian ancestral noblemen with all corresponding rights and privileges. *Noyons* and *zaisangs* who had civil ranks lower than the eighth class were equal in their status to individual noblemen. *Zaisangs* that owned *aimaks* but no ranks were classified as ancestral noblemen, and those who had no *aimaks* as individual honorary citizens.⁴⁰

Considerable amendments were introduced to the inheritance law with its key objective to preserve and consolidate the ownership of *noyons* and *zaisangs*, as well as to ensure tax collection. Henceforth, no landlord's *uluses* or ancestral *aimaks* were to be divided among the heirs: the eldest

heir in the family line was the only heir in the inheritance succession. The next objective was obviously to make Kalmyk noblemen's children learn and seek profit from state service. So it was not by accident that the legislators provided *noyons* and *zaisangs* with freedom of movement within Russia and allowed them to send their children for military and civil service and to the state educational institutions.

The Regulations openly fixed legal inequality between people belonging to privileged and non-privileged estates: corporal punishment was not applicable to the former (*noyons*-landlords and members of their families belonged to this estate). Moreover, court jurisdiction strictly depended on the estate status. *Noyons*, members of their families, *ulus* rulers, and *zaisangs* owning *aimaks* had legal proceedings on civil and criminal cases only with the *Zargo*; *zaisangs* who neither owned any *aimaks* nor held any office had legal proceedings with *ulus* courts.⁴¹ As for common Kalmyks, they got the right to complain of their landlords and of officials from the *oblast's* and *ulus* administrations. However, this was done merely to pacify people. This provision was purely formal since the same officials and landlords forming a part of all institution in Kalmykia without any exception were to examine complaints filed by common people.

The Regulations also contained legislative provisions related to making Kalmykia a part of the Russian common market. Becoming a part of the Russian market was required for providing the Kalmyk population with goods through trade chains, for acquiring financial means, and for selling cattle and cattle breeding products. Besides, it was also necessary for Kalmykia's economic development and for the establishment of economic relations with other peoples. For this purpose, it was planned to hold three large fairs in Kalmykia within a year: in the Khoshoutovsky *ulus* on the left bank of the Volga between September 25 and October 10; in the Maloderbetovsky *ulus*, in the Aksay river between June 15 and July 1; in the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus*, in the Kuma river from May 15 to June 1. At the fairs of 1834, Kalmyks sold cattle and cattle breeding products in the amount exceeding 1.5 million rubles in banknotes, which was equal to nearly 430 silver rubles or about 100 thousand head of cattle.⁴²

Other measures to promote trade including the provision of access to Russian merchants and peasants were taken. At the same time, it was banned to import alcoholic drinks to Kalmykia or sell them. The guilty could be brought to account based on the Russian criminal law.

The lawmakers also defined the procedure and conditions for leaving the *oblast's* boundaries by Kalmyks for employment: a special written permit was necessary from the *noyon*-landlord or *ulus* ruler. A large num-

ber of Kalmyks were employed in the fishing industry (about nine thousand persons) and salt mines (over one thousand persons a year) by that time.⁴³ The Regulations enabled Kalmyks from state *uluses* to join the estate of Cossacks with benefits provided for Cossacks—exemption from all duties for a five-year term.

Unlike the 1825 Regulations, the Regulations of 1835 radically changed the procedure for appointing higher officials in Kalmykia and considerably enhanced the status of the *oblast* as an administrative and territorial unit. While since 1771 higher Kalmyk officials would be appointed by the Internal Affairs Ministry, from 1835 on it was the tsar himself that appointed the Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people and Lama of the Lamaist clerical administration upon the Internal Affairs Ministry's recommendation. The tsar also appointed the chairman of the *Zargo* Court upon the decision of the Ministry of Justice. The Astrakhan military governor's opinion was taken into account without fail when nominees for the positions were presented as well as when the Internal Affairs Ministry appointed assistants (deputies) of the Chief Guardian and the Ministry of Justice—advisers to the *Zargo*.

Although some traditional Kalmyk local structures and institutions were preserved, the Russian influence was becoming dominant: Russians were appointed to higher positions in the *oblast*'s and *ulus* administrations and the Russian language was made mandatory for office work and business relations. Kalmyk noblemen became an accessory instrument of the state administration at the local level.

As compared to the previous administration and judicial bodies, the new ones—the Kalmyk Administration Council, the *Zargo*, and the Lamaist clerical administration—were slightly different where the principles of their formation and membership were concerned. In this respect, they contained many components typical of representative bodies (to be more precise largely based on estates): *noyons*' meetings nominated candidates for assessors to the Administration Council and the *Zargo* for a three-year term; the *zaisangs*' meetings nominated candidates for the Council's representatives for the same period. The general meeting of *bagshis* and *ge-lyungs* elected members of the Lamaist clerical administration for a term of three years. All members of the aforesaid collegial bodies elected in this way were later approved by the Astrakhan military governor.

Thus, the Regulations reflected further centralization and bureaucratization of administration in the country: process of further consolidation of the absolute monarchy. The document made Kalmyk administration a part of the Russian common system that was in essence a system of military—

administrative control. Kalmykia virtually lost remainders of its distinctive political character and became one of Russia's parts. The introduction of the institution of guardians and classification of officers from Kalmyk administration as state officials of the Russian Empire by defining their status under the Table of Ranks was merely a due beginning of the process. One can say that Kalmyk bureaucracy of the all-Russian type was originated in Kalmykia at that time.

According to the Table of Ranks, the Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people and the *Zargo* Chairman were equal by their positions to state advisors (class 5); assistants to the Chief Guardian, advisors to the *Zargo* and assessors from the Kalmyk Administrative Council and the *Zargo* belonging to *noyons* were equal to court advisers (class 7); *ulus* guardians, offers for special issues and representatives to the Kalmyk Administrative Council were equal to collegiate assessors (class 8); assistants to *ulus* guardians and inspectors in the Kalmyk Bazaar and Mochagi were equal to titular councilors (class 9); secretaries from the Council, the *Zargo*, and the Lamaist clerical administration, as well as Council treasurer were equal to collegiate secretaries (class 10); clerks from *ulus* courts were equal to collegiate registering clerks (class 14).⁴⁴

The Regulations put in force on January 1, 1836 should be considered and assessed as a special legislative act since they comprised stipulations related to many spheres of law. In addition to administrative law, civil law was broadly presented (property and inheritance law, etc.). Much attention was paid to criminal and procedural law. First of all, the Regulations defined the legal status of Kalmykia as a unit of administrative and territorial control in the Russian state. That is why organization of administration was based on general and local interests, and a system of the *oblast*'s and local administration was formed as a part of the common Russian state apparatus but taking into account ethnic specifics. The Regulations specified a procedure for recruiting and appointing personnel and defined relations between the *oblast*'s administration and Russian state institutions in much detail.

The document defined the status of social groups and classes in the Kalmyk society: in legal terms, they were now made similar to the corresponding social estates in the Russian Empire. Therefore, the Regulations can be regarded as a considerable step towards defining Kalmykia's status, confirming Kalmykia's full inclusion in the Russian state building process.

Thus, the 1835 Regulations defined and fixed Kalmykia's political and social system, which was largely integrated into the all-Russian political

and social system. This led to the stabilization of the arrangements in the Kalmyk society in the future. Normative documents adopted later merely amended and supplemented the Regulations, mainly in terms of improving the administration.

Simultaneously, the administration of the Don Cossacks was reformed, too. The *Regulations on administration of the Don Army* approved by Tsar Nicholas I on May 26, 1835 included a special section (Chapter 10) about the Kalmyk administration system. To control the Kalmyk camping ground in the Don territories (formed as a part of the Don Army in 1803), a special administrative body was established—the Kalmyk Board comprising a judge, two assessors and two members. The *nakaznoy ataman*^{iv} appointed judges and assessors from among Russian military officials, and members from among Kalmyks (one belonged to the estate of *zaisangs* and the other one—to the clergy). The administrative personnel included a secretary, two senior and two junior scribes appointed from among Russian military officials, and an interpreter.⁴⁵

In administrative terms, the Don Kalmyks were still subdivided into three *uluses*, hundreds led by *sotniks* that had powers of a *stanitsa* judge, and *khotons* headed by the *prikaznoy* Cossack. The *sotnik* and *prikaznoy* Cossack were elected at an assembly of the hundred or *khoton*, respectively, for a three-year term.

The Kalmyk Board was subordinate to two authorities at once: to the head of the Army Watch for military issues, and to the Army Board for civil issues. In addition to military issues, the Regulations made provisions for the economic matters. In particular, Kalmyks were to live in a virtually settled way, to store forage for cattle for the winter, engage in farming, build permanent dwelling, etc. The Regulations legalized the communal ownership of land in the form of Cossack community—*yurt*. Kalmyks were to perform various duties: provide a cart and convoy the detained, transport officials sent on an assignment and couriers, and to carry out the field and internal watch with their own horses, in full uniform and armed. The personnel list of Kalmyk Cossacks of 1836 comprised 1,820 men.⁴⁶

Don Cossacks obtained territory and their own territorial administration similar to the administration of the Russian military Cossacks. As a result, they became equal to Cossacks in their legal status in all respects (performance of duties, service, educating their children in military schools on an equal basis with all Cossack children, etc.). However, in

^{iv} Translator's note: *nakaznoy ataman*—an acting or appointed *ataman* (a Cossack chief).

line with its general policy with regard to ethnic groups, the tsarist administration consolidated supreme control over the Don Kalmyks in the hands of Russian officials. It was also a period when Kalmyk *sotniks* and *khoton* officials appeared and acquired a social status close to that of the privileged estates.

Since the policy of guardianship over state peasants was intensified and some changes in their legal status took place (they obtained a number of legitimate options for defending their rights to use the state land; they were allowed to conclude land lease agreements with individuals and enterprises; after all, they were entitled to choose their occupation by themselves, to be engaged in crafts, to become small businessmen or to join urban estates⁴⁷), the Department for State Property, the Finance Ministry, was reorganized into the State Property Ministry in 1837. In addition to control of state property, the newly emerged Ministry (with Prince P.D. Kiselev as the minister) was in charge of state peasants.

The State Property Ministry had local bodies: state chambers in *guberniyas* were in charge of state lands, forests, and other property (they also supervised state peasants); chiefs in *oblasts*; peasant self-government authorities and peasant courts in *volosts* and villages.

The reform of the administration of the state property and peasants affected Kalmykia as well. Under the *Regulations on the administration of the state property in guberniyas* approved on April 30, 1838, the head of the Astrakhan Chamber for State Property became the Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people.

This kind of combination of two positions was conditioned by the fact that Kalmyks' camping grounds in the Astrakhan *guberniya* and in the Caucasus *oblast* were state-owned territories under the supervision of the Astrakhan Chamber for State Property. Thus, virtually under control of the Internal Affairs Ministry since 1838, and subordinated to the Astrakhan military governor at the local level, Kalmykia was now under control of the State Property Ministry in the higher administrative respect. Kalmykia was under the double control for almost ten years. The reform of the Kalmyk administrative authorities and establishment of Kalmykia's status based on the guardianship principles were finalized in 1847.

According to the aforesaid principles, the State Property Ministry prepared new *Regulations on the administration of the Kalmyk people* supported by the State Council and approved by Nicholas I's decree of April 23, 1847.

The twelve-year experience of applying the previous Regulations showed that some changes and amendments were necessary in a number

of sections and clauses so that the Kalmyk society's development and new requirements related to classifying Kalmyks as the estate of state peasants could be reflected in the document. The 1847 Regulations emphasized that Kalmyks roaming in the Astrakhan *guberniya* and Caucasus *oblast* were full-fledged subjects of the Russian Empire and enjoyed special rights typical for state peasants too. Moreover, the status of the lands provided to Kalmyks was specified: they were classified as state lands for general use.⁴⁸ Taking into consideration all of the factors mentioned above, the State Property Ministry prepared the draft of the new *Regulations on the administration of the Kalmyk people*.

According to the Minister, Prince P.D. Kiselev, the major goal of the document was "to facilitate the administration of the people and make Kalmyks closer to state peasants by regulations and procedures of their administration as far as possible, and thereby introduce Russian traditions among Kalmyks gradually and prepare them for merging with the native people, as it is done with other foreign peoples."⁴⁹ In fact, the minister expressed the key principles of the ethnic policy pursued by the official authorities with regard to the Kalmyk people.

The new Regulations comprising 11 chapters and 254 clauses along with appendices represented a standard legislative document that supplemented and elaborated on the 1835 Regulations. That is why it is necessary to examine and study them together as one code of laws and single program for Kalmykia's administration and development. Whereas the first Regulations laid the legal foundation for political and social development of Kalmykia in general terms, the second one established additional legal norms for incorporating the Kalmyk people into the common economic, social and cultural life of Russia's peoples. Moreover, the second document clarified the status of the estates, regulated relations between estates in greater detail, and made it possible for people to change their status and religion on a legal basis.

According to the new Regulations, Kalmykia remained under control of the State Property Ministry since 1838 because the ministry was in charge of both ethnically distinct regions and state peasants (common people were equal to state peasants in their status), and it was also in charge of state lands. Some issues in Kalmykia were under supervision of both Internal Affairs Ministry and Astrakhan military governor (for example, matters related to the recruitment of Cossack units performing police functions, etc.). In fact, direct communication between Kalmykia and the tsar was no longer in place, the only exception being the occasion of appointing the Kalmyk lama upon a recommendation of the Internal Af-

fairs Minister. Locally the higher administrative control over Kalmykia was exercised by the head of the Astrakhan *guberniya*, the governor. This was a consequence of the power consolidation in the hands of governors including their intensified impact on local authorities that resulted from the implementation of the *Order to governors* dated June 3, 1837 that proclaimed governors “masters of *guberniyas*.” Thus, the 1847 Regulations introduced another unit in the administration of Kalmykia: “the head of the Astrakhan *guberniya*.” Therefore, the horizontal control was intensified.

The head of the Chamber for State Property, the Astrakhan *guberniya*, remained a direct representative of the State Property Ministry and leader of Kalmykia. He was the Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people and “was under control and supervision of the chief of the (Astrakhan) *guberniya* as well.”

The 1847 Regulations introduced principal changes in the Kalmyk administrative system. Though it still had the status of an internal *oblast*, a practical step was taken to turn it into an integral part of the Astrakhan *guberniya* by forming a common territorial administration. The new Regulations did not provide for the formation of an independent collegial body that would be the highest one in the *oblast*, the Kalmyk Administration Council with the chief to be appointed by the tsar. Instead of the Council, an executive and administrative body operating in accordance with the principles of undivided authorities—Department for the Kalmyk People’s Affairs at the Astrakhan Chamber for State Property chaired by its chief (alias Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people appointed by the State Property Minister)—was established. The Department comprised a counselor, an official with special commission, two *stolonachalniks*^v and two assistants, a filing clerk, an accountant, scriveners, and a representative from the Kalmyk people elected from among landlords and ancestral *zaisangs* for a term of three years. The representative of the people was approved for the position by the State Property Minister upon coordination with the Astrakhan governor. The representative simultaneously represented Kalmykia in the Astrakhan Chamber of Criminal and Civil Court, since the *oblast’s Zargo*⁵⁰ was liquidated in 1848. Besides, the Department comprised a doctor and two medical assistants, a veterinary and his assistant.

While the Regulations of 1835 appointed the Astrakhan military governor to be the general chief of the *oblast* as a representative of the Inter-

^v Translator’s note: *stolonachalnik*—a chairman of the board.

nal Affairs Ministry, the new Regulations assigned this role to the manager of one of branch bodies in the Astrakhan *guberniya*, that is, he turned out to be inferior to the former by his status as an official of the *guberniya*'s level although he also represented the Ministry.

The new Regulations made the Chief Guardian the top official in Kalmykia with virtually unlimited powers. The scope of his powers was considerably expanded, especially in issues regarding the personnel of the *oblast*'s and *ulus* institutions. He gained the right to debar even *noyons*-landlords from the *ulus* administration, to appoint and dismiss the rulers in *uluses*, and to convene *ulus* congresses in order to elect a guardian to supervise over landlords' *uluses*. Rulers in state *uluses* and guardians of landlords' *uluses* were later approved by the State Property Minister.

The major goal of the Chief Guardian was to manage administrative issues, to ensure public order in *uluses* and appropriate distribution of camping grounds among *uluses* as well as rational use of lands and pasture grounds. He controlled the activities of the police service mainly formed of Astrakhan Cossacks as instructed by the military governor. His new duties also comprised the arrangement of the transfer of Kalmyks to the settled life style as well as control over Kalmyk settlements along the routes passing through the Kalmyk steppes. The Chief Guardian exercised control over the work of all the *oblast*'s and *ulus* institutions, organization and holding of elections and re-elections of officials in the *oblast*'s and local institutions, as well as accuracy of the tax distribution, tax collection and fulfillment of duties imposed by the legislation.⁵¹

The Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people was guided by Russian laws in his activities. The legislators did not entitle him to communicate with central authorities, except the State Property Ministry. The main provisions regulating the powers of the Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people were based on the policy pursued by State Property Minister P.D. Kiselev and aimed at the improvement of the state peasants' living conditions. According to the new Regulations, he was to pay great attention to issues of public healthcare, development of food supplies (especially supplies of cattle, bread, etc. in difficult times), and protection of Kalmyks' rights. The Chief Guardian's duties comprised annual population census by estates and submission of data to the State Property Ministry; he was also to have exact data on the number of *khuruls* and clergymen. New *khuruls* were built only upon his authorization and approval by the State Property Ministry.

The Regulations also defined a system of local administrative bodies and court: in *uluses*—*ulus* administration, *ulus Zargo* court; in *aimaks*—ancestral *zaisang*, and in case there was no ancestral *zaisang*—*aimak*

elder; in *khotons*—*khoton* elder. Religious affairs were under the sole supervision of the lama. According to these Regulations, *ulus* and *aimak* bodies of local self-government—congresses—were formed for the first time in Kalmykia. This new administrative system was closer to the form of administration that existed for Russian state peasants, who were united in special rural communities (with several rural communities forming a *volost*), which had self-government (they had “congresses” and could elect “chiefs” and “elders” to cope with *volost* and rural issues as well as special judges for the courts).⁵²

The local executive and administrative body was represented by the *ulus* administration and comprised a guardian (appointed by the Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people and approved by the State Property Minister); a *noyon*-landlord in control of the *ulus* by right of succession (in state *uluses*—a ruler appointed by the Chief Guardian and approved by the State Property Minister as agreed upon with the Astrakhan governor); two assistant guardians, who were appointed by the Chamber for State Property and approved by the governor. Besides, the administrative staff comprised two *demchis* (tax collectors) and three jurors (appraisers who were in charge of property, loss, etc. appraisal), who were elected at *ulus* congresses and approved for the positions by the Chamber for State Property, an interpreter, and secretaries. Since the Department was to perform police supervision functions, a military team was subordinate to it.

The Guardian with his assistants directly supervised the *ulus* administration. However, problems within *uluses* (in both landlords' and state *uluses*) including financial problems were to be settled by the *noyon*-landlord or ruler. The outgoing documents related to these issues were to be signed by the Guardian as well as *noyon*-landlord or ruler. Any disagreements between the Guardian and *noyon*-landlord (ruler) were to be settled by the Astrakhan Chamber for State Property. *Ulus* administrations were in charge of notary functions (“they were in charge of certifying acts of any kind made between Kalmyks”).⁵³

Taking into account the fact that the Kalmyk *oblast* was actually transferred under administrative and territorial control of the Astrakhan *guberniya*, the functions of its supreme judicial body (the *Zargo*, which was liquidated in November 1848 by a resolution of the Governing Senate⁵⁴), were handed over to the Astrakhan Chamber of Criminal and Civil Court “to take part in the settlement of cases related to Kalmyks in some way.” A judicial body for *uluses* was the *Zargo*, which was the court of the first instance exercising its rights as an estate court (for noblemen and peasants). The *ulus Zargo* was in charge of civil, domestic, and criminal cases,

guardianship issues, and property disputes; if such disputes arose among Kalmyks, they were settled based on ancient Kalmyk laws. The *ulus Zargo* comprised the chairman (*noyon*-landlord or ruler); two members: a senior one appointed by the *ulus* guardian and a junior one appointed by the *ulus* assistant guardian; two lay judges elected by the *ulus* congress from among *zaisangs* or landlords (it was also possible to elect him from among common people) for a term of three years.

The new Regulations defined legal proceedings for the *ulus Zargo* in detail. Its key goal was to reconcile the complainant party and defendant. In case of reconciliation, the final decision was to be signed by both parties. Being a judicial body in charge of civil and criminal cases, the *ulus Zargo* also dealt with guardianship issues. It operated under the supervision of the *ulus* guardian and was subordinate not only to the Chamber of Criminal and Civil Court but also to the Chamber for State Property (having to report to it on a monthly basis).

The Regulations also introduced such concepts as release on bail and adjuration by the complainant party and defendant, with the text of the oath composed by the Kalmyk lama and approved by the State Property Minister, as well as mandatory presence of witnesses (not more than ten witnesses in number) "related to inquiries and criminal cases." Property disputes for amounts exceeding 30 rubles as well as criminal cases beyond the scope of *Zargo's* competences were to be handed over to the senior or appellate judicial body, the Astrakhan Chamber of Criminal and Civil Court. Measures of punishment for minor civil cases imposed by the *Zargo* were to comply with rural judicial statutes for state peasants, and those for criminal cases—with general Russian laws.

It is necessary to pay attention to an important feature introduced by the Regulations of 1847 into the judicial practice, which took into account Kalmyk social life and living conditions. Article 169 of the Regulations stipulated that, when imposing fines on Kalmyks in favor of the complainant party and in other cases, the essential items were not to be included in the list of property to be seized. The list of the items included: *kibitka*, clothes, food supplies for the family for four months, cattle if the defendant did not own more than one camel, two horses, three cows and ten sheep, forage supplies for the cattle required for two months. Yet, in case of insolvency the guilty person was to earn the required sum and pay the debt within six months.⁵⁵

Ulus courts were to record convicted Kalmyks in the "penalty" book according to the form fixed for rural punishments in settlements of state peasants. *Ulus* courts were inter-estate ones, yet decisions related to land-

lords and *zaisangs* were submitted to the Astrakhan Chamber of Criminal and Civil Court for approval.

The *aimak* or ancestral *zaisang* approved by the governor still ruled the *aimak* by inheritance right. In case he was underage, a guardian appointed by the *aimak* congress upon a recommendation of the Chamber for State Property governed the *aimak*. In those *aimaks* with no ancestral *zaisangs*, *aimak* elders were elected from among *zaisangs* (who did not own *aimaks*) at an *aimak* assembly. Elders elected by *aimak* assemblies from among common Kalmyks and approved in offices by the Chamber for State Property were put in charge of *khotons*.

The 1847 Regulations introduced *ulus* and *aimak* assemblies into the system of local self-government authorities for the first time. By their membership and principles of their work, they were similar to such institutions as estate-representative bodies formed exclusively on the basis of census representation. Landlords, *zaisangs*, foremen, elders, and common people (one person representing 20 *kibitkas*) aged 25 and older, owning some property, having positive reputation, without any previous conviction and not under investigation were entitled to take part in *ulus* assemblies; *zaisangs*, foremen, elders, and common people (one person representing 5 *kibitkas*) were entitled to take part in *aimak* assemblies.

The most urgent problems in the life of people such as elections of officials (lay judges of the *ulus* *Zargo*, *demchis*, appraisers, *bodokchei*, and elders for control over a part of the *ulus*—two candidates for each position), distribution and performance of natural duties, as well as other problems related to public affairs were discussed at *ulus* assemblies convened by the Chief Guardian every three years and chaired by an administrator (landlord or ruler). It was mandatory for the *ulus* guardian to take part in *ulus* assemblies. The assembly agenda and resolution made at the assembly—public verdict—were made in writing.

During *aimak* assemblies the *aimak* elder and foremen of *khotons* (two candidates for each post) were elected for the period of the next three years; distribution and performance of natural duties by *khotons* was discussed; guardians to supervise orphans were appointed; other problems related to the social life of the *aimak* were solved. Attendance of the assemblies was compulsory, and absence without a proper reason such as an official departure or disease resulted in a fine in the amount of one silver ruble to the advantage of the communal duty.

The age of people to be elected for the aforesaid positions in the *ulus* or *aimak* was not to exceed 60; other conditions for elections included good health and nomination for the first time.⁵⁶

According to the new law, religion administration was based on the principle of one-man management and was concentrated in the hands of the lama as the supreme clerical official and the head of all *khuruls* in Kalmykia. Though according to the *Schedule of khuruls and clergy* approved by the State Property Ministry in 1847 there were 67 *khuruls* with 1,656 clergymen⁵⁷ in service in Kalmykia, the lawmakers failed to establish the collegial body—Lamaist clerical administration. Now the lama was elected at the congress of bagshis from *uluses*, upon the suggestion of the Chief Guardian and taking into account opinions expressed by *ulus* administrators (landlords, guardians, or rulers). He was approved in his office by the Emperor's decree upon the suggestion of the State Property Minister as agreed with the Astrakhan governor.⁵⁸

The key obligations for the lama included supervision over development and maintenance of *khuruls*, morals of clergymen, admission to the clergy and endowing clerical ranks to persons, demoting in clerical rank or position, keeping register of *khurul* attendants. Moreover, he performed judicial functions for both clergymen and laymen as well, for example, in relation to domestic and matrimonial cases (establishing the relation degree of the future couple before the marriage, reconciliation of husband and wife, divorce, etc.). The lawmakers regulated the lama's obligations as well as procedures of the church office work and relations between the lama and temporal power in much detail. While the lama and church officials communicated with Kalmyks in their native language, they were to communicate with state enterprises, *guberniya's* officials and central authorities in the Russian language. The lama who was actually a state official was subordinate to the Chief Guardian in the administrative respect. While the 1835 Regulations stipulated that complaints against clergymen were sent to the Astrakhan military governor, the new Regulations said that it was necessary to address them to the Chief Guardian.

For the first time in history, the new Regulations provided Kalmyks with freedom to choose their religion. However, Lamaism was named as the key religion. At the same time, it was not ruled out that Kalmyks could belong to other confessions including Christianity, and even certain benefits were provided for them. *Noyons* and *zaisangs* who converted to Christianity preserved all benefits, property, possessions, and Kalmyks under their control. If common people converted to Christianity together with their landlords, *noyons* and *zaisangs* were entitled to transfer their property under state control and receive the amount equal to the annual income from the property from the state budget. When Kalmyks belonging to

landlords or ancestral *zaisangs* became Christians, the landlords and *zaisangs* received a consideration in the amount equal to the five-year income (by the number of families) from the Russian treasury because they were losing their profits in this case.

Kalmyks (both individuals and their families or settlements—*khotons* or *aimak*) adopting Christianity were allowed to leave their landlord, and they obtained the status of state peasants. In this case, they were also entitled to receive some land from the state reserve for free settlement. Moreover, the settlement was also entitled to establish their own government in a way similar to administrations of village communities or *volosts* of state peasants. All common Kalmyks converting to Christianity received some financial aid from the state budget to set up their households: Kalmyks with families obtained 15 silver rubles per each family member, and all single Kalmyks received 8 silver rubles.

Moreover, the Regulations enabled Kalmyks to join the Cossack Army (by the landlord's approbation; state peasants—after sight of the notice of payment all money taxes). They were provided with some benefits such as exemption from duties payable by Cossacks for a period of five years.

The territory where Kalmyks were roaming was distributed by *uluses*. In administrative respect, it was divided into *uluses*: four landlords' *uluses* (Khoshoutovsky, Maloderbetovsky, Bolshederbetovsky, and Kharakhuso-Erdeniyeysky) and three state *uluses* (Bagatsokhurovsky, Erketenevsky, and Yandyko-Ikitsokhurovsky); ancestral and non-ancestral *aimaks*; *khotons* (at least 15 *kibitkas* per *khoton*). When defining the number of families per *khoton*, the lawmakers obviously took into account the *Regulations on foreigners* of 1822 stipulating the numerical strength of ancestral administration among nomads. As compared to the previous period, the number of state *uluses* increased from two to three at the expense of the Yandyko-Ikitsokhurovsky *ulus*; the number of landlords' *uluses* decreased from five to four, accordingly.

The territory of Mochagi and the Kalmyk Bazaar was in general use by all *uluses* and held an exceptional position. The Kalmyk Bazaar was mainly a large-scale cattle trade center where it was also possible to hire workforce. Guardians and their assistants (the elder in Mochagi and the *bodokchei* in the Kalmyk Bazaar) elected at *ulus* assemblies were at the head of Mochagi and the Kalmyk Bazaar.

Unlike the previous Regulations, the new Regulations defined the status and rights of feudal lords (*noyons*-landlords, landlords having several families, *zaisangs* owning *aimaks*, *zaisangs* that did not own any *aimaks*, and clergy) in more detail. By their status, *noyons*-landlords and

members of their families belonged to ancestral noblemen entitled to join military or civil service as before. *Zaisangs* who owned *aimaks* were equal to ancestral noblemen as well, *zaisangs* that did not own any *aimaks* were honorary citizens, if they were in agriculture they were equal to ancestral noblemen. Thereby, they were in a privileged position, as the Russian nobility. If *noyons*, members of their families, the lama or *zaisang* were to be punished by the court resolution and the punishment was related to the deprivation of their honor, it was never executed without the conclusion of the Governing Senate. Corporal punishments were not applicable to them, either. They had the right to move within the Astrakhan *guberniya* and Caucasus *oblast* freely. However, *noyons*-landlords and *aimak zaisangs* were strictly prohibited from selling, mortgaging or giving as gifts the Kalmyks that were subordinate to them.

The 1847 Regulations substantially elaborated on the inheritance law, regulating the issues pertinent to inheriting *uluses*, *aimaks*, and property. Clause 16 stipulated that after the death of parents the inheritance right should be carried over to their children or to the next of kin if the couple was childless in accordance with the Russian legislation. If a young child (son or daughter) was the legal heir, a guardian from among the closest relations was appointed according to a stipulated procedure.

Landlords' *uluses* and ancestral *aimaks* were not to be divided between heirs after the death of their owners or when the owner became a clergyman: the eldest person in the family line inherited them. At the same time, lawmakers authorized the Chief Guardian to deprive the *noyons*-landlord of the right to manage the inherited *ulus* under exceptional circumstances. In this case, the *ulus* was to become state property.

The document covered the status and obligations of common Kalmyks in full because it was common Kalmyks who carried the main burden of taxes and duties (both in terms of money and in kind). Each family was to pay 8.15 silver rubles per year (57 silver kopecks to the *aimak zaisang*; the rest of the amount was to be paid as follows: in state *uluses*—for administrative needs and to the capital of society; in landlords' *uluses*—44 kopecks for administrative needs and to the capital of society, and 7.14 rubles for the landlord's profit—*alban*). *Demchis* collected the money to be paid for administrative needs and to the capital of society; money to be paid to landlords and ancestral *zaisangs* were collected by landlords and *zaisangs* on their own.

Moreover, each family was to perform duties in kind as well: to provide *ulus* officials sent on a mission with a cart, *kibitka*, and fuel; to take part in horse-mounted pickets, frontier service in the Astrakhan line and as

a part of Cossack troops; to participate in the road construction and repairs as well as in foresting.⁵⁹

The legal capability of common Kalmyks was greatly restricted. They were not entitled to incur any loan obligations or establish contractual relations. The lawmakers prohibited them to borrow money in the amount exceeding 1.5 silver rubles without any guarantee on the part of the *zaisang* or *demchis*; they could borrow money in the amount exceeding 30 rubles only based on the landlord's or *ulus* ruler's guarantee. Common people were also banned from leaving their *khotons* within the boundaries of the *ulus* without permission from the *khoton* foreman.

Because the process of making Kalmykia a part of the Astrakhan territorial administration was finally completed and due to measures taken by the government to convert Kalmyks to the settled way of life, the lawmakers just defined the status of lands provided to Kalmyks for camping grounds. The section entitled *On the rights of Kalmyks to settle* said, "the lands provided to Kalmyks from the state shall be considered as lands for their general use." That is why the territory occupied by Kalmyks did not belong to the Astrakhan *guberniya* but belonged to lands in the state's ownership, that is, lands in charge of the State Property Ministry. The latter received a report on the observance of land boundaries by Kalmyks every year. In this connection, the tsarist administration allowed Kalmyks to build permanent farms, houses, factories, and plants; maintain forests, gardens, and kitchen gardens; and be farmers on the state lands provided to them by law. People from other authorities were banned from settling down in the lands provided to Kalmyks or pasturing their cattle even on a provisional basis. Along with land tenure, specific measures were taken and legal basis was formed for the development of the economy, trade, farming on a stationary basis, building houses, corrals and wells, and planting gardens and kitchen gardens, etc.⁶⁰

As compared to the previous Regulations, the lawmakers substantially expanded the sphere of commercial relations between Kalmykia and other *oblasts* seeking to make Kalmykia a part of the all-Russian market. Kalmyks were allowed "to sell their products and cattle freely and at any time, but to sell other goods in towns, they must" have trade certificates in the due form. At the same time, annual fairs in the Khoshoutovsky, Maloderbetovsky, and Bolshederbetovsky *uluses* kept operating.

For the first time, a Social Capital Fund of the Kalmyk People was established for accumulation and proper use of funds. The lawmakers defined income sources (amounts obtained as a result of saving funds spent on maintaining the administrative apparatus, land tribute items, three ru-

bles from taxes per *kibitka*, fines, etc.) and brought the use of funds under personal control of the Chief Guardian and State Property Minister (for amounts exceeding 300 rubles). The funds were intended for Kalmyks in case of natural disasters, for building houses and public buildings, as well as for the development of agriculture.

A number of measures aimed at making Kalmykia a part of the Russian common administrative system provided for training translators and lower officials that would have a good command of Russian. The major goal pursued by these measures was to train administrative staff that would be closer to the population and speak their native language, too, that everybody could understand. In this connection, much attention was paid to the establishment of the first educational institution in Kalmykia—a school where interpreters and translators could be trained and where they would study Russian. According to the *Regulations on school for Kalmyks* approved by the Emperor's decree on April 23, 1847, mainly children of *noyons*, landlords and *zaisangs* as well as children from trustworthy and honorary families were admitted to the school. Fifty children aged 8–12 were to study at the school. The Astrakhan Chamber for State Property established the school with the inspector at its head appointed by the Chief Guardian and approved by the Astrakhan military governor.⁶¹

On the whole, the *Regulations on the administration of the Kalmyk people* were aimed at improving the way of life and legal status of the estates and social groups of the population in order to enhance their integration into the social structure of the Russian society. Much attention was paid to introduce improved economic methods and develop new branches of economy, agriculture, culture, and education. At the same time, we must emphasize that the scheduled events were conducted at the expense of Kalmyks (establishment of the Social Capital Fund as well as taxes and different duties and collections) and were intended for “benevolent care” about Kalmyks, increase of incomes from the economy, formation of support for tsarism from the local feudal highest ranks, and overcoming the multinational spirit in the structure of the Russian population.

The system of “care” about Kalmyks turned into strict and direct superintendence on the part of the state exercised through central and local, that is, *guberniya*'s authorities, legislation, religion, bureaucratization, and monopolization of administration and control, and through the regulation of all aspects of Kalmyks' life. This kind of “care” resulted in the incorporation of Kalmykia's political institutions into the common Russian political system. Kalmykia lost all residual elements of administrative auton-

omy and status of a constituent member of Russia, having turned into an ordinary part of the Russian Empire by the middle of the 19th century.

Despite the radical transformations carried out by Tsar Alexander the Second (liberalization of peasants entailing other reforms—inter-estate courts and inter-estate *zemstvos* as well as reforms in the field of education and army, etc.) in the 1860s and 1870s, the Kalmyk administrative system established back in the 1840s and its interaction with central and *guberniya*'s authorities remained practically unchanged for a long time. Only as late as in 1867 the Department for the Kalmyk People at the Astrakhan Chamber for State Property underwent reorganization to become the Kalmyk People Administration at the Astrakhan Chamber for State Property. However, the membership of this authority's including the leaders remained the same. The reorganization was merely a part of the reform of state property administration after the abolition of serfdom.⁶² The relative stability of the Kalmyk administrative apparatus could be explained by the fact that the abolition of serfdom and reforms of state institutions, courts and local governments did not affect it.

Since the population of Kalmykia became in many respects integrated into the Russian population (mainly in the legal sense) after the abolition of serfdom, the State Property Ministry began preparations for the abolishing of feudal relations among Kalmyks in the early 1870s. However, because of subjective reasons, such as opposition on the part of Kalmyk feudal lords, official circumlocation, the resolution of the problem was delayed for more than 30 years.⁶³ A peculiar peasant reform was conducted and serfdom was abolished in Kalmykia only in the early 1890s, that is, during the period of rapid capitalism development in Russia as a result of the collapse of the serfdom system.

Completion of Kalmykia's incorporation into the system of administrative and territorial control of the Russian Empire (first half of 19th–early 20th centuries)

The State Council approved and Tsar Alexander the Third signed the law *On the abolition of mandatory relations between some estates of the Kalmyk people* on March 16, 1892. Under the law, common Kalmyks were freed from the feudal dependence and provided with all personal rights “stipulated by general laws of the Empire for free rural inhabitants”; “the right of the Kalmyk *noyons*-landlords, *ulus* owners, petty owners and an-

cestral *zaisangs* to Kalmyks dependent on them, as well as collection of fees from them shall be abolished forever." Common Kalmyks, now free rural inhabitants, obtained civil rights, for example, the right to make contracts on their own, leave the place of their residence, become members of other estates, and others. They also acquired social rights (the right to take part in assemblies for solving local problems, to form local government bodies, etc.).

The abolition of serfdom in Kalmykia had some particular features. Since the land was in public use, common Kalmyks had nothing to buy from their landlords. That is why they became completely independent without being temporarily indebted; *noyons*-landlords, *ulus* owners, petty owners, and ancestral *zaisangs* obtained redemption (compensation for the loss of profit) in the amount equal to the fivefold annual *alban*. Moreover, petty owners and ancestral *zaisangs* "in great need" received "a one-time grant with the amount to be fixed by State Property, Finances, and Internal Affairs Ministries on an individual basis" beyond the compensation. Redemption expenses ("compensations" and "one-time grants") were paid not from the state budget, but from the Astrakhan and Stavropol *guberniya*'s fund of the Kalmyk public capital.

In view of the abolition of serfdom and in compliance with the general principle that all sums of money in the Empire were under control of the Ministry of Finances, the new law of 1892 imposed a monetary tax on the Kalmyk population in favor of the state. Unlike the state capitation tax, the new tax was calculated on the basis of six rubles per *kibitka* a year, which was two rubles and 15 kopecks less than the previous tax (8 rubles 15 kopecks). The local Kalmyk People Administration distributed the *kibitka* tax by *uluses* and *aimaks* in the Astrakhan *guberniya* with a subsequent approval by the Astrakhan governor, and in the Stavropol *guberniya* this was done by the Chief Police Officer in charge of the nomad peoples, with a subsequent approval by the Stavropol governor.⁶⁴

The *aimak* assemblies distributed the tax amount to be paid by the *aimak*. When the assembly distributed the *kibitka* tax, it was entitled to reduce the tax amount or exempt a particular family from the tax at all but the extra burden payable by other families was not to exceed 20%. The *ulus* guardian's approval of the assembly's resolution was mandatory before it acquired force. Thereby, frankpledge dominating in Russian rural communities after the abolition of serfdom was legalized.

Demchis (tax collectors) collected *kibitka* taxes in *aimaks* every six months. The collected funds were handed over to the *ulus* guardian. Tax collections from *uluses* came to *uyezd* treasuries of the Astrakhan or Stav-

ropol *guberniya*. *Ulus* guardians were entitled to make "common Kalmyks that did not pay their taxes in time work until they paid off the entire amount." The entire amount of the money tax collected in Kalmykia was at the State Property Minister's disposal to use for specific needs.

However, in view of dramatic segregation among the Kalmyk population and according to the law *On replacement of the kibitka tax to be paid by Kalmyks in the Astrakhan guberniya with a tax on the cattle in their possession* dated June 10, 1900, the "kibitka tax" was replaced with a tax on cattle regardless of the estate membership (the tax per head of domestic animals was imposed as follows: camel—75 kopecks; horse or large cattle—40 kopecks; small cattle—5 kopecks).⁶⁵ A major natural disaster struck the Kalmyk steppe in the winter of 1895–1896. As a result, people's solvency was undermined and arrears with the major tax increased. This stimulated the transition to the new taxation to a certain degree.

Noyons-landlords and *zaisangs* used to be in control of ancestral *uluses* and *aimaks* based on the principles of ancestral landlord power though under the guardians' control. According to the new law, the principle of ancestral succession of power was abolished, and the state was to control *uluses* now. That is why *noyons*-landlords and ancestral *zaisangs* were relieved of their duties related to the control of *uluses* and *aimaks* and positions of *ulus* rulers were abolished. *Ulus* guardians and their assistants (eight new positions for assistants were introduced) were vested with the administration of *uluses* (former landlords' and state ones) and *ulus* courts. Elders elected by *aimak* assemblies for a three-year term were to control *aimaks* including ancestral ones, which were in fact made equal to Russian *volosts*.⁶⁶ Thus, the new law destroyed all particular features in the procedure of Kalmykia's government.

The 1892 law not only abolished mandatory relations, liquidated peasants' feudal dependence, and provided the bulk of the population that had been powerless with civil and social rights, but also unified the Kalmyk social structure and conditions with the Russian ones and integrated its administrative system into the *guberniya*'s and all-Russian internal apparatus, having abolished the remaining features of its administrative autonomy and having incorporated and subordinated Kalmykia to the Astrakhan *guberniya*. Due to the new situation in the Kalmyk steppe, the post of the Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people was liquidated in 1897 and his functions were handed over directly to the Astrakhan governor.

Since a major part of the Volga Kalmyks left for Dzungaria, their territory was gradually restricted. The borders of the territory of the Kalmyk camping grounds became more or less established by the 1820s. The terri-

tory of camping grounds under state control in the Lower Volga amounted to 10 million *dessiatines*^{vi 67}.

The Volga river divided the key territory occupied by Kalmyks—the Kalmyk steppe—into two unequal parts. Most of the Kalmyk lands were on the right bank. The right-bank part of the Kalmyk territory adjoined the Saratov *guberniya* lands (near the villages of Bolshiye and Malye Chapurniki, Tsatsa, and Sarepta) in the north. Its border ran along the Volga river, and the Caspian Sea in the northeast, east, and southeast. It adjoined the Stavropol *guberniya* from the Caspian Sea and up to the Guyduk river (Kuma's tributary), as well as East and West Manych in the south. The border ran in the vicinity of Remontnoye and Torgovoye settlements, as well as the Bolshiye Kresty, Dubovaya, and Tsaritsa rivers in the west. The area of this territory was 7,128,352 *dessiatines*, or 7,769,990 hectares.

The smaller part of the Kalmyk steppe was on the left bank of the Volga. In the north, it bordered with lands allocated to Kalmyks up to Lake Baskunchak and to the Kyrgyz belonging to the Inner (Bukei) Horde; in the east, it bordered lands of the Bukei Horde and the Kundrov Tatars; in the southwest and west, it adjoined lands belonging to villages of Bolkhunskoye, Pirogovskoye, Mikhailovskoye, Tambovskoye, and Knyazhiye, the Astrakhan *guberniya*. The territory of the left-bank Kalmyk steppe amounted to 724,105 *dessiatines*, or 789,274 hectares.

Thus, the total territory of the Kalmyk steppe made up 7,852,457 *dessiatines* (8,559,264 hectares) by 1860 excluding 716,529 *dessiatines* (781,017 hectares) allocated to Russian settlers in the vicinity of the steppe from 1848 to 1850, as well as 12,840 *dessiatines* (13,996 hectares) marked off to the Mozharskiye salt lakes in 1815 according to the order *On delimitation of the Kalmyk lands* dated May 19, 1806. The area of the Kalmyk steppe was 8,581,826 *dessiatines* (9,354,190 hectares) by the early 19th century.

Besides, the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* added to the Stavropol *guberniya* in the early 1860s occupied the territory of 2,000,000 *dessiatines* (2,180,000 hectares). Kalmyks living in the territory of the Don Army occupied the territory of 1,034,000 *dessiatines* (1,127,060 hectares). As mentioned above, nominative *ukases* issued to the Senate by tsars Paul I on September 27, 1800 and Alexander I on April 28, 1802, along with a decree dated May 19, 1806, provided Kalmyks with territory for camping

^{vi} Translator's note: *dessiatine*—a Russian measure of land, approximately equal to 2.7 acres.

grounds between the Volga and Don rivers, the Sarepta and the Caspian Sea. The *ukase* of April 28, 1802 stipulated that Kalmyks were provided with the land in the amount "necessary for pasturing their herds and flocks to avoid any constraints for different hordes as they roam" and "for providing Kalmyks with meadows, hayfields, forests, etc. in the allocated lands and prevent any claims on the part of people strange to them."⁶⁸

As for the size of the Kalmyk population in the Lower Volga, no exact data were available until the official census was conducted in the Astrakhan *guberniya* in 1862. As a result, 26,218 *kibitkas* (families) with the population of 115,260 persons (119,866 persons including *noyons*-landlords, *zaisangs*, and clergy) were registered in the Astrakhan *guberniya*. Upper estates made up 3.85% of the Kalmyk population (in Russia—7%).⁶⁹

Exact information about the size of the Kalmyk population in Russia in general (190,648 persons) and by *oblasts* (in the Kalmyk steppe: 138,582 persons, in the Stavropol *guberniya*: 10,814 persons, in the Terek *oblast*: 3,595 and in the territory of the Don Army: 32,283 persons) was collected during the 1897 all-Russian census. The population in the Kalmyk steppe along with Kalmyks from the Stavropol *guberniya* grew from 124,989 to 149,396 persons for 35 years, that is, by 24,407. In other words, the annual growth of population made up 700 persons on average (which was very low—0.5%, while in Russia it was equal to 1.31%). Due to high rates of the *guberniya* colonization, the share of Kalmyks in the structure of the Astrakhan *guberniya* population reduced from 48.2 to 17.2% by 1897 as compared to 1795.⁷⁰

The share of people belonging to upper estates in the structure of the Kalmyk population reduced from 3.85 in 1862 to 3.12% in 1897. At the same time, officials and merchants (4,642 people or 3.52%) emerged in the population structure by that time. *Gelyungs* and *dge-tshuls* (272 people), *mandzhiks* (172 people), and *khurul* school pupils (1,259 people) were serving in 66 large and small *khuruls*. The Kalmyk steppe population was distributed by confessions as follows: Lamaists—134,948 people (97.4%), Christians—4,047 people (2.92%), and Moslems—678 people (0.48%).⁷¹

In spite of the changes taking place in the Kalmyk economy under the impact of the Russian economy, extensive cattle breeding was still the key economic activity of Kalmyks in the 19th and early 20th century. Speaking about its condition during the period under consideration, we can operate with some numerical data that may not be precise but provide an outlook on the dynamics in the cattle headcount in Kalmykia.

Kalmyks had 1,232,808 head of animals in the early 19th century (1803), including 238,330 horses, 166,628 head of cattle, 767,398 sheep, and 60,452 camels; in 1897 they had only 477,337 head of animals (38.72%), including 53,795 horses (22.6%), 102,401 cattle (61.5%), 300,404 sheep (39.1%), and 20,737 camels (34.3%), respectively. One can see that the total headcount of animals reduced by 755,471 animals (61.2%) for less than a century. The key reasons for such a considerable reduction in the headcount were related to the murrain caused by droughts, severe winters, lack of forage (cattle losses amounted to 244,098 in 1891, 200,304 in 1892, 178,117 in 1893, and 303,441 in the winter of 1895–1896)⁷², loss of horses during the 1812–1813 war, changes in the animal breeding structure (as the number of horses and camels used in military actions reduced substantially), and social differentiation of the Kalmyk population.

It is possible to assume that the aforesaid number of cattle in 1897 excluded 181,462 head sold that year. It is obvious that this was mainly common people that suffered hardships in the severe winter in 1895–1896. They sold 198,105 animals of all types (95.3% of animals sold by all classes) in 1895 and 174,984 animals (96.4%) in 1897. During the period in question, the minimum number of cattle Kalmyks had was registered in 1827 and the maximum—1,446,706 animals—in 1890. It should be noted that the situation in cattle breeding improved to a certain degree by the end of the 19th century: Kalmyks had 527,945 head of animals and sold 131,661 head in 1900.⁷³

In addition to developing the livestock economy, Kalmyks started engaging in new industries in the 19th century (agriculture, horticulture, and gardening), immovable forms of cattle breeding. The settled way of life became more popular among the Kalmyk population, too. However, new branches of the Kalmyk economy were developing very slowly. Only 153 Kalmyk families were engaged in farming in the Astrakhan *guberniya* (they handled 1,120 *dessiatines* of land) and a little more in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* in the 1860s. There were about one hundred of agricultural farms in the Kalmyk steppe and the area of lands where cereals were growing grew from 1.1 to 4.5 thousand *dessiatines* by 1900. There were only 600 *dessiatines* of land under crops in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* in 1860; 11.1 thousand *dessiatines* were used under crop by 1890 (8.6 thousand *dessiatines* belonged to tenants).⁷⁴

Cereals, such as wheat, rye, oat, barley, and millet prevailed at the early stage of agriculture development; considerable areas were used under mustard and flax in the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus*. The development of new

branches in the Kalmyk economy resulted in the formation of three economic zones by the end of the 19th century (Western, Central, and Eastern zones), which were different by their territory, soil, and climatic conditions, and the ratio of cattle breeding to crop agriculture for that matter.

In the Western zone (Bolshederbetovsky *ulus*, Stavropol *guberniya*), both cattle breeding and crop farming developed. The cultivated field area was equal to 55,230 *dessiatines*, and the cattle headcount was 73,007.

The Central zone (Maloderbetovsky, Manychsky, and Ikitsokhurovsky *uluses*, the Astrakhan *guberniya*) had cattle breeding and crop farming. The cultivated field area was equal to 13,378 *dessiatines*, and the cattle headcount was 442,771.

The Eastern zone (Bagatsokhurovsky, Kharakhusovsky, Aleksandrovsky, Erketenevsky, and Yandyko-Mochazhnyi *uluses*, the Astrakhan *guberniya*) was a cattle-breeding zone. The cattle headcount amounted to 272,095 animals. Besides, fishery was developing in the zone, too. However, it did not have any fish processing enterprises of its own, except for fishery enterprises owned by major Russian fish industrialists. Kalmyk families without cattle had to seek employment with those enterprises. As many as 13,539 Kalmyks were working in fishery and 1,280 were working in salt works in 1862.⁷⁵

When market relations appeared in Kalmykia and changes in its economy were introduced, fundamental shifts in the Kalmyk social structure followed. The social stratification of the Kalmyk population in the late 19th–early 20th century was as follows: people without cattle—2,984 households (12.3%); poor (1–10 animals)—15,597 households (64.4%); middle class (11–50 animals)—4,239 households (17.5%); well-to-do (51–100 animals)—812 households (3.5%); large-scale owners (101–500 and more animals)—556 households (2.3%). Former feudal noblemen (*noyons*, *zaisangs*, and clergymen) and the emerging bourgeoisie were engaged in commodity production in the field of cattle breeding and farming with the use of hired labor. Common people made up the major part of the population—96.77%. Some feudal lords managed to get used to the market relations and became large-scale cattle dealers (*noyons* D. Tundutov, M. Gakhayev, the Tyumens, *zaisangs* E.D. Dondukov, O. Orgechkiyev, Ts.D. Onkorov, etc.).⁷⁶

In the late 19th century Kalmykia began integrating into the national Russian market and developing economic relations with large Russian cities and towns acting not only as a supplier of agricultural raw materials from cattle breeding and farming industries, but also as a market for selling industrial goods made in neighboring villages and towns. These com-

mercial economic relations had a particular form—via traveling salesmen, fairs, and stationary trade. Commercial relations were enhanced owing to a newly emerged process of converting the Kalmyk crafts into small-scale commodity production, which supplied the market with industrial goods (felt, spare parts for *kibitkas*, leather and wooden dishes, saddles, harness, beds, jewelry, etc.).

Capitalist relations and close relations developing with the Russian and other peoples had a considerable effect not only on the social and economic life of the Kalmyk society, but also on its culture and living conditions. Kalmyks were in the process of gradual transition to the settled way of life and were getting used to new types of dwelling, namely permanent buildings, and to new forms of clothes. New types of food became available, too; new elements were incorporated into the Kalmyk customs; the Kalmyk ceremonies and holidays, and their spiritual culture became considerably enriched. While in the early 19th century (in 1805) only two Dzhangar songs were published in German by B. Bergman, as many as ten songs were written down by Nomto Ochirov from Eelyan-Ovla and published in Kalmyk in the early 20th century, in 1910.

Russian (A.M. Pozdneyev, N.Ya. Bichurin, N.I. Strakhov, N.A. Nefediyev, I.A. Zhitetsky, G.N. Prozritelev, V.L. Kotvich, Yu. Lytkin, A.A. Bobrovnikov, B.Ya. Vladimirtsov, etc.) and foreign (G.I. Ramstedt, Alexandre Dumas, etc.) scientists, writers and publicists became especially interested in the studies of Kalmyk history, philology, folklore, and ethnography. In 1905 V.L. Kotvich published a collection of Kalmyk riddles and proverbs in Russian. Original written literature developed during the same period due to the use of the printing type in the Kalmyk written language, and Kalmyk books were published in Russian (e.g., in 1885 A.M. Pozdneyev published *Saga of Derben-Oirats* by Batur-Ubashi-Tyurmen [1819], and *History of Kalmyk Khans and Trip to the Tibet Country* by Baza-bakshi Menkedzhuyev). It should be noted that Kalmyk authors began writing their books in Russian (Ye. Chonov—*Kalmyks in the Russian Army in the 17–18th Centuries and in 1812*, Pyatigorsk, 1912; N. Ochirov—*Astrakhan Kalmyks and their Current State*, Saint-Petersburg, 1915), and periodicals were published both in Kalmyk and Russian (in particular, a Russian–Kalmyk Calendar).

Secular education was formed in the middle of the 19th century in Kalmykia. In 1848 a Kalmyk male college was founded, and a gymnasium was opened at this college in 1856. By the end of the 19th century, a female college for 20 girls and eight *ulus* schools for 240 schoolchildren were opened. Besides, as many as 174 Kalmyk students were studying in

Russian educational institutions. Though the network of general and specialized educational institutions was not developing with great success, and the number of students was not very high either, serious attention was paid to the elaboration of textbooks, manuals and dictionaries for Kalmyk schools: primer book in Russian and Kalmyk (1804); primer book with the etymology of the Kalmyk grammar (1843) and Russian–Kalmyk dictionary (1853) by V. Diligensky; Kalmyk–Russian dictionary by A. Vorontsov (1888); Russian–Kalmyk dictionary by P. Smirnov (1847); Russian language textbook for Kalmyks by I. Yastrebov (1892); Kalmyk–Russian primer book by N. Badmayev (1910); Kalmyk–Russian dictionary by A.M. Pozdneyev (1911), etc. A new research area was also founded and developed during the same period—Kalmyk studies, which inquired into the problems of history, philology, ethnography, and culture of the Oirat Kalmyks.⁷⁷

Some outstanding scientists made a great contribution to the formation and development of Kalmyk studies as a research area in Russian and world science: P.S. Pallas (*Travels through Different Guberniyas of the Russian Empire*, Saint-Petersburg, 1809; *Travels through the Southern Guberniyas of the Russian Empire in 1793–1794*, Leipzig, 1799–1801), D.N. Anuchin (*Alexander von Humboldt as a Traveler and Geographer and, in Particular, as an Explorer of Asia*, Moscow, 1915), K.M. Baer (*Caspian Expedition of K.M. Baer in 1853–1857. Diaries and Materials*, Heritage for Science, Leningrad, 1984, Vol. 9), I.I. Mechnikov (*Notes on the Population of the Kalmyk Steppe of the Astrakhan Guberniya*, News of Geography, 1873), I.V. Bentkovsky, who wrote a number of articles on Kalmyk ethnography, culture, economy, and history, I.A. Zhitetsky (*Papers about the Astrakhan Kalmyks' Mode of Life. Ethnographical Notes*, (1884–1886), Moscow, 1893), G.N. Vysotsky (*Yergeny. Cultural and Philological Essay*, Petrograd, 1915), G.N. Prozritelev (*Military Past of Our Kalmyks. Stavropol Kalmyk Regiment and Astrakhan Regiments in the Great Patriotic War of 1812*, Stavropol, 1912).

We are very thankful to G.N. Prozritelev for his objective assessment of the achievements of the Kalmyk people for the Russian state: he wrote that “Kalmyks must not be forgotten as they were sons of the great country and were shedding their blood for its unity.” The following words also comprised a profound idea: “Kalmyks will never disappear from the historic scene unnoticed while they have belief in their strength and hope for the support from Russians.”⁷⁸

Not only scientists and writers but also artists began paying their attention to Kalmyks in the early 18th century. Examples of their works can be

pictures drawn by world-known artists: *A Life of Peter the Great...* by I.I. Golikov; *Portrait of Kalmyk woman Annushka* by I.P. Argunov, 1767; *Mounted Kalmyk* by C. Geissler, 1770s; *Kalmyk Wrestling* by Ye. Skotnikov, early 19th century; *Portrait of Kalmyk Woman Bayausta* by O.A. Kiprensky, 1813; *Kalmyk* by K.P. Begrov, 1822; *Kalmyk* by I.Ye. Repin, 1871; *Mounted Kalmyk in the Steppe*, 1863–1864, *Kalmyk Boy*, 1863, *Kalmyk Lama*, 1873, by V.V. Vereshchagin; *Near a Kibitka*, 1887, *Portrait of Kalmyk Boy Namro*, 1887, *Portrait of Kalmyk Man Chaader*, 1887, *Internal of a Kalmyk Kibitka*, 1887, by I.M. Pryanishnikov, etc.⁷⁹

Architecture, in particular cult, began developing in the late 18th–early 19th centuries in Kalmykia. The first permanent *khuruls* were built in the Bagatsokhurovsky (1798) and Maloderbetovskiy (1800) *uluses*. By the early 20th century, the Astrakhan, Stavropol, and Don Kalmyks had 28 large and 69 small *khuruls* combining features of Western European and Buddhist Oriental architecture.⁸⁰

It was not only by efforts of Russian and foreign researchers and travelers that Kalmykia and the Kalmyk people were attracting attention and becoming popular, but also owing to outstanding personalities among the Kalmyks themselves. Artist Fyodor Ivanovich Kalmyk (1764–1824) was among the prominent personalities in the 18th century. He graduated from an arts college in Karlsruhe and mastered his art in Italy and Greece. His works were considered outstanding samples of art and engraving and were highly appreciated by his contemporaries and art experts that lived later.

A world-renowned artist, Alexey Yegorovich Yegorov (1776–1851), who was Kalmyk by origin, was also engraved in the history of Russian art. T.G. Shevchenko, V.G. Belinsky, K.N. Batyushkov, who wrote that “this is the artist who does credit to the Academy and who we, Russians, can be rightly proud of,” were also speaking highly of his works. A.Ye. Yegorov’s apprentices were F.A. Bruni, K.P. Bryullov, A.A. Ivanov, M.I. Skotti, who later became renowned masters of art.

Wonderful works (*Peter the First*, 1874; *Scene in a Forge*, 1875) by Yevdokim Yegorov, A.Ye. Yegorov’s son, as well as by well-known Kalmyk artist Nikolay Nikolayevich Aberda (1807–1850) are displayed in Russian museums.⁸¹

A gifted, self-taught hydraulic engineer, great figure of Peter the Great’s epoch, Mikhail Ivanovich Serdyukov (1677–1754), was another prominent Kalmyk. He became a part of history as the author of the project for reconstruction of the Vyshniy-Volochok waterway and organizer of the construction of a number of water communications. He was the first

hydraulic engineer to build a reserve water storage basin in the Vyshniy-Volochok water system. This water system was supervised by M.I. Serdyukov and his son Ivan.⁸²

At the turn of the 19th–20th centuries, the attitudes, legal status, economic, cultural, social, and spiritual state of different ethnic groups in multiethnic Russia (with 57% of its population so-called “strangers”) depended not only on their self-identification and internal political course of the state, but also on the stance taken by the leading political forces in the Russian society. By publishing the Fundamental State Laws on April 23, 1906, the official authorities confirmed the inviolability of its policy related to the state structure. Article 1 said, “The Russian state is one and indivisible.” However, it is worth mentioning that no legal restrictions were stipulated in Russia based on the ethnic origin except in the cases of Jews and Catholic Poles. According to the Code of Laws on Non-Russian Peoples of 1822, peoples of non-Russian origin were divided into three groups depending on the stage of their development (vagrant, nomad, and settled peoples); a specific system of relations between the tsarist administration and local government was stipulated.

At the same time, legal restrictions were based on confessional membership (Orthodox Christianity was the state religion) and competence in the state (Russian) language. Article 3 said, “Russian is the language applicable in the entire country and is mandatory in the army, fleet, and all state and public institutions.” The use of vernacular languages was to be stipulated by special Russian laws.

The Russian Assembly (an organization of Russian noblemen) and the monarchical (right) party, named Union of the Russian People, which was backed up by Tsar “Nicholas the Second as the bulwark of the state,”⁸³ supported the state’s official policy backing a united and indivisible Russia. The monarchical party considered Russians the only people enjoying the right of “state formation and administration” and recognized non-Russian peoples “living in the original Russian lands” from the earliest times as equal to the Russian people. The Octobrist Party (Union of October 17) based on the Manifesto of October 17 supported in practice the unitary state that was formed historically and its unity, rejected autonomy, did not rule out equal rights for all Russian citizens and possibility for widespread development of local ethnic governments, and supported constitutional monarchy with its people’s representatives based on the common electoral law.

The program of Cadets (Constitutional Democratic Party, which was formed as left-wing opposition and later shifted to the center), the largest

liberal centrist party, suggested that the state was to guarantee “the right of free cultural self-identification in addition to equal civil and political rights” for all peoples, to democratize the electoral law and to summon people’s representatives.⁸⁴ The Progressist Party, which supported the integrity of the state along with the independence of local self-government and opposed any autonomy or federation, was close to Cadets in its views regarding the state system.

P.B. Struve, a scientist and publicist, who represented liberal-democratic forces, was a supporter of the national Russian state idea and was holding positions of strengthening its power on the basis of fast economic development, political, and cultural unity. On the contrary, right liberals demanded providing national and territorial autonomy for the peoples, and thought that it was possible for all Russian peoples to develop within a united empire. However, this position was not approved by Russian liberals, who considered the building of a federation based on the ethnic principle unacceptable. In contrast to the All-Russian National Union, which held a right-wing position regarding ethnic issues, national liberals supported the democratization of the central and local government system and provision of bourgeois-democratic liberties for all citizens of the country.⁸⁵

The Socialist–Revolutionary Party, which appeared in the political arena in the early 20th century, insisted on a democratic republic with a broad autonomy of *oblasts*, the federal form of the state structure, and recognition of the right for peoples to self-determination. The People’s Socialist Party, which had views on the state system close to those upheld by SRs,^{vii} believed that a people’s state should be created, in which all means of production would be nationalized and self-government introduced. The political objective of the Radical Party, which occupied the position in-between the SRs and Constitutional Democrats, was to convene a Russian Constituent Assembly and establish “United States of Russia” (with a political and administrative autonomy). The Party of Freethinkers was to the right of these parties. As an ideal state model, it proclaimed a “representative administration with a monarch on top”; it backed up restriction of the voting rights by residential qualification, and the introduction of autonomy for the “underdeveloped peoples.”⁸⁶

In the early 20th century, the Russian Social Democratic Labor Party joined the revolution. Its political objective was to overthrow autocracy, replace it with a democratic republic, and transfer power to the Constitu-

vii Translator’s note: SR—a member of the Socialist–Revolutionary Party.

ent Assembly. As for the national policy, the party advanced a slogan about the right of peoples to self-determination, but failed to elaborate this principle. At the early stage of their history, social democrats advocated neither the federative principle, nor decentralization. They rather supported the idea of a large and centralized state, and the idea of cultural and national autonomy within a unitary state, without referring to specific territories or specific types of social and political system.⁸⁷

In spite of various program opinions, ideas of public and political organizations of Russia, and specific ethnic features, the central authorities ignored the interests of the country's peoples and restricted participation of "non-Russians" in the political life of the country on the level of legislation. An outstanding statesman of that time S.Yu. Vitte was aware of the possible negative effects and malignancy of the ethnic policy pursued by the tsar administration. He said, "If the Emperor... had followed the toleration principle fearlessly, ruled out obviously wrong oppression of non-Russians, etc., we could have done without October 17."⁸⁸

The ethnic problem under the constitutional monarchy was not only a subject of political parties' attention, but also caused widespread public discussion, in particular, because of the resolution passed by the authorities to establish a national representative body—State *Duma*—and publication of the *Manifesto on the Improvement of the State Order* (October 17, 1905). Under the impact of the revolutionary events in 1905 and public opinion, the tsarist administration had to amend the legislative acts passed previously (*Institution of the State Duma* and *Regulations on the Elections for the State Duma* dated August 6, 1905). New legislative acts were adopted, which formed the legal basis for the formation and activities of the representative body: *Decree on Changes to the Regulations on the Elections for the State Duma* (December 11, 1905), *Manifesto on Changes to the Institution of the State Duma*, a revised *Institution of the State Duma* (of February 20, 1906), and new *Institution of the State Duma* (an *ukase* dated February 20, 1906).

In spite of discrimination of ethnic minorities and their being deprived of the right to take part in the formation of the country's representative body, the State *Duma*, the tsarist administration had to recognize in new legislative acts the nomadic non-Russians as subjects with electoral rights and to provide them with the right to participate in multistage elections (the right to nominate candidates and vote). The tsarist administration equaled them to some ethnically distinct *guberniyas* and *oblasts* but with a reservation. The *Regulations on the Elections to the State Duma* of August 6, 1905 said, "Elections to the State Duma in the Polish Kingdom *gu-*

berniyas, Ural and Turgai *oblasts*, Siberian *guberniyas* and *oblasts*, Steppe and Turkestan territories ruled by governors–generals, and in the Caucasus *oblast* ruled by the governor, and elections with the participation of the nomad non-Russians shall be held based on special regulations.”⁸⁹ At the same time, Article 6 of the legislative act excluded “migrant non-Russians” from the list of voters.

The legislative acts that amended the *Regulations on the Elections to the State Duma* and statutes thereof published in addition to them on December 11, 1905 regulated the representation from a number of ethnic *oblasts* including Kalmykia in the *Duma*. Thus, the *Regulations on the Elections to the State Duma for Non-Russian Peoples* required knowledge of the Russian language in addition to the property qualification. Upon a suggestion of the Internal Affairs Ministry, special regulations stipulating a quota for Kalmyks (one member of the State *Duma*) were approved for participation of nomad non-Russians from the Astrakhan and Stavropol *guberniyas* in the State *Duma* elections on March 25, 1906. Due to the slow development and approval of the regulations, some ethnic *oblasts* organized and held elections with a considerable delay, and other *oblasts* failed to elect a *Duma* member because of an early dissolution of the *Duma* in July 1906.

Elections of a Kalmyk member for the First State *Duma* in 1906 were held in two stages because it was not electors who elected him directly (multistage elections), but electoral delegates. At first electoral delegates were elected (one electoral delegate from each *ulus* and one from local electoral congresses of permanent residents from settled settlements) at *ulus* assemblies (their chairmen were appointed by administrators of Kalmyk people by secret vote), as well as at local congresses of house and *kibitka* owners. Thus, electors from Kalmykia were referred to the third curia (*volost* and village inhabitants) by participation in State *Duma* elections though two-stage elections were determined.

The dates for *ulus* assemblies and meetings were fixed and chairmen from among *aimak* elders were appointed (on April 7, 1906) by the Kalmyk people's administrator. Electoral delegates, whose age was to be more than 25, were elected based on preliminary lists. In fact, men aged less than 25 and women were deprived of the voting right. Quite a high property qualification was set up as well. Petty owners and some middle-scale owners could not take part in the election based on this criterion. People who did not know Russian could not be elected members of the State *Duma*.

The first stage of the election campaign for the nomination of candidates for a seat in the State *Duma* from Kalmykia—election of electoral dele-

gates—took place in the Kalmyk steppe, the Astrakhan *guberniya*, on April 18, 1906 and in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, the Stavropol *guberniya*, on May 12. The following electoral delegates were elected a seat in the First State *Duma*: *noyon* D.Ts. Tundutov from the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus*, *zaisang* Ts.D. Onkorov from the Aleksandrovsko-Bagatsokhurovskiy *ulus*, O.G. Yergechkiyev from the Kharakhusovskiy *ulus*, major cattle breeder B. Buldanov from the Erketenevskiy *ulus*, *zaisang* Ts. Badmayev from the Ikitsokhurovskiy *ulus*, *zaisang* B.A. Shonkhorov from the Khoshoutovskiy *ulus*, *zaisang* O.U. Dzhambayev from the Yandyko-Mochazhnyi *ulus*, Tatar mullah Ali Agayev from the Kalmyk Bazaar and the settlement of Kapkina, peasant and cattle breeder N.Ya. Noskov from the settlements of Bislyurt, Yashkul, and Chilgir, *noyon* M.M. Gakhayev from the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*.

The second stage of the campaign for electing a member for the First State *Duma* from Kalmykia took place in May 1906, and the State *Duma* had already proceeded to work (on April 27). Ten electoral delegates elected *noyon* D.Ts. Tundutov as the member of the First State *Duma* from Kalmykia from among electoral delegates on an alternative basis (candidates M.M. Gakhayev and D.Ts. Tundutov) by secret voting. His powers lasted for about two months (the First State *Duma* was dissolved in July 1906). Member of the State *Duma* D.Ts. Tundutov became a member of the First State *Duma*'s Agrarian Committee.

On the whole, 17 peoples of Russia were represented in the First State *Duma*, including seven peoples that had only one representative each. Most of the members represented Russians (59.1%), Poles (11.3%), Ukrainians, Byelorussians, and Jews. Constitutional democrats had 179 seats (35.9%) and independent members had 105 seats (21%),⁹⁰ including one member representing Kalmykia in the State *Duma* of the first convocation. Since *Duma* members grouped together mainly by belonging to a particular party, D.Ts. Tundutov joined the largest fraction—the fraction of constitutional democrats.

When the tsarist administration dissolved the State *Duma*, it proceeded with forming the State *Duma* of the second convocation in late 1906–early 1907. The Second State *Duma* elections were held in the Kalmyk steppe in January–May 1907, that is, the elections were over when the *Duma* of the new convocation had already been working for two months.

The Astrakhan *guberniya*'s commission for elections included the Kalmyk People's Administrator from Kalmykia and was in control of all issues related to the elections in the Kalmyk steppe. The election of electoral delegates took place in Kalmykia on January 14, 1907. As a result of

the first stage elections under the same terms and conditions, the following were elected: Ts. Karmykov (southern part of the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus*), *zaisang* L.B. Arluyev (northern part of the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus*, instead of D.Ts. Tundutov who died in March 1907), *noyon* S.-D.B. Tyumen (Aleksandrovskiy *ulus*), *zaisang* T.O. Opoginov (Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*), resident N.P. Smirnov (settlements of Bislyurt, Yashkul, and Chilgir), A. Ivanov (settlement of Kapkina), *zaisang* Ts. Onkorov (Bagatsokhurovskiy *ulus*), B. Buldanov (Erketenevskiy *ulus*), O.-G. Yergechkiyev (Kharakhusovskiy *ulus*), *zaisang* Ts. Badmayev (Ikitsokhurovskiy *ulus*), *zaisang* O.U. Dzhambayev (Yandyko-Mochazhnyi *ulus*), and mullah Ali Agayev (Kalmyk Bazaar).

The meeting of electoral delegates comprising 11 people (A. Ivanov was absent) took place on May 5, 1907 and elected *noyon* S.-D.B. Tyumen a member of the Second State *Duma* from Kalmykia out of two candidates (L.B. Arluyev and S.-D.B. Tyumen) by secret voting. Just like D.Ts. Tundutov, he joined the party of constitutional democrats, which was still the largest fraction in the Second *Duma* (constitutional democrat F.A. Golovin was elected the chairman) in spite of the reduction in the number of seats (from 184 to 123). Apparently, this was due to the declarations on the part of constitutional democrats in the *Duma* concerning the problem of nationalities. They obviously tried to ensure members of ethnic minorities that "all non-Russian peoples can find support only in the party of constitutional democrats." Constitutional democrats initiated the discussion of the draft law on equal civil rights in the *Duma* (the law was not passed because the *Duma* was dissolved). That is why ethnic groups and professional groups joined constitutional democrats to total 180–190 people together with them.⁹¹

According to the *Manifesto on the Institution of the State Duma* dated February 20, 1906, *Duma* members were not accountable to their electors. Only the Governing Senate could dismiss *Duma* members. The *Duma* could be dissolved early by a resolution of the tsar. It is well known that the Second State *Duma* worked for 102 days only and was dissolved by the tsar's *ukase* on June 3, 1907.

Kalmyk members of the First and Second State *Dumas* D.Ts. Tundutov and S.-D.B. Tyumen would speak up in the *Duma* about the needs of their electors, seeking greater independence in the administration of the Kalmyk internal affairs. They suggested that the *Duma* should free the Kalmyk people from administrative guardianship. When discussing the agrarian problem (in May–June of 1906) and Kazakh members' request to resettle Russian peasants (May 1907), they suggested returning the lands

allocated for rent-in-kind items to Kalmyks, excluding disposition of Kalmyk lands in the future by providing the coastal and Volga Kalmyks with fishery water areas, and replacing the state cattle tax with the income tax, writing off arrears the poorest Kalmyks had, organizing cattle die-off mutual insurance and credit with the capital assets coming from the public Kalmyk assets, ensuring the binding stabilization of shifting sand, and organizing water supply in the Kalmyk steppe.⁹² Unfortunately, the suggestions were not examined and remained outstanding because of the *Duma* dissolution.

The *Manifesto on the Dissolution of the State Duma* for convocation of a new *Duma* and amendment of the procedure for the elections for the State *Duma*, and new *Regulations on the Elections to the State Duma* were published on June 3, 1907, which resulted in substantial restrictions for ethnic groups in their electoral rights. The Manifesto said explicitly, "The State *Duma* must be Russian in its spirit. Other peoples forming a part of our state should have their State *Duma* representatives to defend their needs but their number must not enable them to solve purely Russian problems."⁹³

The law of June 3 deprived Kalmyks of the right to send a representative to defend "their needs" in the State *Duma*. The electoral law and legislation about formation of the Third and Fourth State *Dumas* failed to provide Kalmyks with either active or passive electoral right. They were discriminated under the pretext of their nomad way of life (they were referred to "migrating non-Russians"). The introduction of the Regulations on the Elections for the State *Duma* dated June 3, 1907 resulted in the situation when only 15% of the population of the Russian Empire enjoyed the elective right. That is why the Third and Fourth State *Dumas* went down in the Russian history as the most reactionary ones in terms of their membership.

Thus, under conditions of great-power chauvinism many peoples of Russia including Kalmyks were excluded from the country's political life. Local vital interests and problems of these groups were ignored. In particular, the law *On the regulation of land assets belonging to settled (peasant and Cossack) population and migrating Kalmyk population within the 15-verst strip within the borders of the Astrakhan guberniya* passed by the Fourth State *Duma* on June 24, 1913 confirmed this. According to the law, land problems of settlers were resolved at the expense of a substantial reduction of Kalmyk lands.

Though the state and political development of Russia as well as parliamentarism in the country as one of the most important components of

the Russian political system, were initiated during that period, the inequality of the rights of different ethnic groups remained in place.

By that time, the Kalmyk steppe and the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* "along with lands at their disposal"⁹⁴ were in control of the chief ministry in the Empire—the Internal Affairs Ministry. When feudal relations were abolished in Kalmykia, provisions of the Manifesto of February 19, 1861 according to which the Land Department of the Internal Affairs Ministry was in control of peasant issues, became effective for Kalmyk peasants. According to the decree of December 23, 1902, Kalmyk peasants were completely subordinate to the department.

The authorities started taking consistent active efforts to introduce the Russian administrative division (village and *volost*) in Kalmykia at the time. The administrative reform in the Kalmyk steppe was completed by 1910. It unified Kalmyk *aimaks* and *khotons* by their status and rights with local administrative and territorial units of the country. According to the 1910 reform, *aimaks* and *khotons* were consolidated and equaled to Russian villages and *volosts*. The number of *uluses* (eight) was preserved; the number of *aimaks* was reduced from 198 to 43; the number of *khotons* was decreased from 772 to 180. They were formed on a territorial basis and based on the size of population (one *aimak* comprised up to 2,000 *kibitkas*—families). However, having reduced the administrative apparatus considerably (as many as 13,231 officials of different levels accounted for 142 thousand persons or 31,372 *kibitkas* before the reform, that is, one official per 110 persons), the lawmaker kept intact the old self-government bodies in *uluses*, *aimaks*, and *khotons* (assemblies) and the administrative leaders—*ulus* guardians (*ulus* administration heads), *aimak* foremen and *khoton* elders, as was stipulated in the *Regulations on the administration of the Kalmyk people* of April 23, 1847.

In compliance with the 1847 Regulations, the system of guardians was preserved in Kalmykia. However, as mentioned above, the Astrakhan governor acted as the Chief Guardian of Kalmyk people since 1897. The Chief Administration of Kalmyk People headed by its administrator was formed as a part of *guberniya*'s administration.

It is significant that principles of Stolypin's agrarian reform—final destruction of age-old feudal relations, village community and frankpledge, a new course towards development of economic (market) relations—laid the basis for the 1910 administrative reform among other things. We think that A.N. Komandzhayev was right to say that "The reform undermined the social and political role of *zaisangs*," who used to be in control of *aimaks* as bearers of feudal and patriarchal relations.⁹⁵

Thus, the administrative reform along with the police reform carried out in compliance with the Temporary Regulations about Police Guard in the Kalmyk Steppe dated December 19, 1886 shortly before the administrative one (police was introduced instead of Cossack detachments) finalized the reorganization of the local administrative and territorial government of Kalmykia. By its structure, it now matched not only the Russian administration but also social, economic, and political conditions in the country.

The transition to market relations along with more favorable natural conditions had a substantial impact on the development of the Kalmyk economy in the early 20th century. Cattle breeding remained the key branch of the economy. The cattle head count amounted to 1,252,905 heads in Kalmykia in early 1915, including 75,980 horses, 223,016 bovine animals, 933,357 sheep and goats, and 20,552 camels, that is, the total head count increased by 2.3 times (horses by 1.16 times; the number of bovine animals almost doubled; sheep by 2.65 times; camels by 11%) as compared to 1901. The cattle head count fell down from 154,900 to 102,500 animals (the headcount of sheep reduced notably—by 59%) due to the development of agriculture in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, the Stavropol *guberniya*, for the same period. The volume of cattle sales and horse demand increased during the same years (1901–1914). While cattle owners from the Kalmyk steppe sold only 89,373 head (including 5,387 horses) in 1901, they sold 236,320 animals (including 10,158 horses) in 1914, that is, 2.64 times as much. In the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, the volume of cattle sales dropped from 8,085 to 5,729 head, that is, almost by 30% for the same period.⁹⁶

The participation of Russia in World War I undermined the economy of both the country on the whole and ethnic *oblasts* as well. The cattle head count in the Kalmyk steppe dropped by 32.5% and was 846,700 animals by 1917, including 77,100 horses, 231,100 bovine animals, 525,500 sheep and goats, 12,900 camels, and 1,500 swine. In the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, the cattle headcount decreased from 102,500 to 79,200 animals, that is, by 27.4%.⁹⁷

Agriculture was developing further in Kalmykia as a result of the process of Kalmyk settling and stratification of Kalmyk peasantry by the early 20th century. The stage of agriculture development in *uluses* was different due to different soil and climatic conditions. Agriculture was developing mainly in the north part of the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus* and in the Manychskiy and Bolshederbetovskiy *uluses*, which were distinctive in their soil and climatic conditions as well as higher percentage of settled people.

Cereals, such as wheat, rye, oats, barley, and millet were the key cultures in their cropping farms. While areas in the Kalmyk steppe cultivated by *uluses* yielded 217 quarters of wheat, 2,321 quarters of spring wheat, 2,553 quarters of rye, 18 quarters of barley, 334 quarters of oats, and 189 quarters of millet in 1901, the crop yield increased in 1914: winter wheat—by 18 times, spring wheat—by 6.6 times, rye—by 7 times, barley—by 332 times, oats—by 3.7 times, millet—by 4 times, and mustard—by 4 times. The gross yield of cereals doubled in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* during the same period.⁹⁸

Along with cereals, Kalmyks set up market gardening, melon-growing, and gardening. In the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus*, where market gardening was highly developed, the area of vegetable gardens more than doubled from 1902 to 1914 and amounted to 720 *dessiatines*; the melon-growing area in the Kalmyk steppe increased by almost 6 times. Moreover, tobacco farming was developing well in the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus*. It met the population's needs in tobacco in part.

Under conditions of exchange relations, the river and sea fishery, as well as pond fishery in some *oblasts*, became the key source of subsistence and major employment for many Kalmyks living along the banks of the Volga river and the Caspian Sea. Depending on their financial condition, Kalmyks engaged in fishery could be divided into three groups: free, contracting, and hired fishermen. Well-to-do Kalmyks could lease fishery areas and hire fishermen. Thus, the emergence of a new branch of trade at the turn of the 19th century—fishery—contributed to greater social differentiation among Kalmyk people.

Crafts were playing an increasingly important role in the Kalmyk economy. It was turning from natural household production into commodity production. While the natural economy was dominant, all household products were used to meet its own needs, Kalmyk handicrafts were beginning to form a part of the market and complying with market rules in the early 20th century. In this connection, there was a rather developed network of households (up to 500) specializing in handicrafts by the end of the 19th century. It is natural that the market demand dictated the development of different handicrafts. That is why skin and wool products, as well as harness, jewelry, clothes, etc. had a significant place in such production.⁹⁹

As a result of the migratory policy (the tsar's *ukase* of December 30, 1846 allowed state peasants to move to Kalmyk lands), the lands allocated to Kalmyks were being actively colonized starting from the middle of the 19th century. As Russian and Ukrainian peasants were colonizing the

Kalmyk lands, they started building Orthodox churches and parish camps, in particular, in the early 19th century. The churches were built not merely to meet religious needs of the settlers. They were also seen as a means to legitimize the status of the settlers that illegally settled in the Kalmyk lands. Moreover, missionaries used the Orthodox parishes as stations for converting Kalmyks. State authorities backed up this tactics. In 1852, Emperor Nicholas I signed a decree allowing Russians to build churches in Cossack villages where baptized Kalmyks lived at the expense of the Social Capital Fund of the Kalmyk People. According to the decree, Orthodox churches were built in some settlements (Torgovoye in 1852, Bisluyurt in 1878, and Chilgir in 1895) at the expense of the Social Capital Fund of the Kalmyk People, although it was mainly the new settlers that attended them.¹⁰⁰ Missionary camps in the Kalmyk steppe under control of the Astrakhan Eparchial Committee of the Orthodox Missionary Society, which was established in January 1871, gradually forced baptized Kalmyks out of the settlements and became settlements of Russians and Ukrainians with ordinary church parishes. Nonetheless, the total area of the Kalmyk steppe amounted to 7.5 million *dessiatines* by the early 20th century. Moreover, the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* uniting 13 *aimak* administrations of the Stavropol *guberniya* had the territory of 290 thousand *dessiatines*.

About 200,000 Kalmyks lived in 1914 in the Kalmyk steppe (148,025), the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* (8,512), as a part of 13 *stanitsa* administrations of the Don Army (about 36 thousand Kalmyks–Cossacks), the Kuma *aimak* (4,392), and the Orenburg *guberniya* (about 2 thousand Kalmyks), that is, the total Kalmyk population in the mentioned *oblasts* increased by 12,520 persons (or by 6.7% for 17 years). In 1897–1914 the population of Russia increased from 117 to 163 million persons (without Polish *guberniyas* and Finland), that is, by 39% (the annual average growth of the Russia's population amounted to 1.31%, while in Kalmykia this index was equal to 0.3%).¹⁰¹

The property-related differentiation in the Kalmyk steppe was substantial during that time. While the number of households without cattle was equal to 2,984 (12.3% of the total number of Kalmyk households) in 1897, it amounted to 4,098 (16.6%) in 1914. Along with the poor classes, it made up 87% of the Kalmyk households, that is, it had grown by 10.3% since 1897. The remaining 13% of households (about four thousand cattle breeders) possessed up to 80% of the total cattle headcount in Kalmykia.¹⁰² Due to the intense social differentiation, many Kalmyk families became farm hands and had to hire out as labor force with major local cat-

tle breeders and rich settlers. Some poor Kalmyks had to leave and seek jobs in Russian villages as well as in fishery and salt works.

The clergy belonged to the rich and privileged class. The position of clergymen improved considerably in the early 20th century. Taking into account the role the Lamaist church played in the formation of public consciousness, a group of Kalmyk noblemen (*noyon* D.Ts. Tundutov, *zaisangs* L. Arluyev and O. Norzunov, as well as *bagshi* D. Setenov) applied to official authorities, namely to Chairman of the Cabinet S.Yu. Vitte with a report on the equalization of rights for Lamaists and Orthodox Christians in early 1905. As a matter of fact, it was an issue of equal rights for different peoples. Taking into consideration the coming bourgeois democratic revolution, the tsarist administration had to make concessions and issued a decree *On strengthening the foundations of toleration* on April 17, 1905.¹⁰³ The major goal of the document was to calm down the Kalmyk people and put the forming national movement under control. Its key principles were soon confirmed in the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which proclaimed the liberty of conscience.

Henceforth, the policy of guardian administration for “introducing order” in *khuruls* and aimed at reducing the number of *khuruls* and their clergymen was abolished. The number of large and small *khuruls* in the Kalmyk steppe increased from 62 to 78 by 1914 as compared to 1904, the number of clergymen increased from 679 to 1,399, that is, almost doubled, and the number of disciples in *khuruls*—from 113 to 702 *mandzhiks*.¹⁰⁴ During the same period a Buddhist temple was built and commissioned in Saint Petersburg, a Mongol department for training missionaries for Mongol peoples was opened in the Kazan Theological Academy, and two theological colleges were opened in the Manychsky and Ikitsokhurovsky *uluses*. Therefore, it was not accidental that lamas were officially supporting the tsarist policy in the Kalmyk steppe.

Education as one of aspects of the Kalmyk life was not paid due attention and it remained almost abandoned, except for training personnel for the Lamaist church. According to the all-Russian census of 1897, the number of literate Kalmyks was only 2.6%, and only 13 people had higher education (with the population of the Kalmyk steppe being 138,582, and 190,648 people with other *oblasts* taken into account), 68 people had secondary education, and eight people had secondary military education. In spite of the awfully low level of education among Kalmyks, the construction of schools was developing very slowly, and no measures were taken to train teachers for the school. While only eight *ulus* schools and one ancestral school were operating in 1903–1905 with 184 schoolchildren at-

tending them, only one ancestral school and 31 literacy schools were opened by 1917. Only 16 teachers worked in all these schools, and 311 children attended them;¹⁰⁵ upon graduating from *ulus* schools, young people could enter the Kalmyk college in Astrakhan. As this college did not have the status of a gymnasium, its graduates were not able to enter any higher education institutions. In spite of the fact that Kalmyks were allowed to obtain secondary specialized and higher education even in capital cities in the early 20th century, only a few of them had a chance to use this privilege because of their financial status. Nevertheless, in the 1916/1917 academic year as many as 15 Kalmyks were attending Russian higher education institutions, and about 50 Kalmyks received higher education by 1917.¹⁰⁶

The development of economy and education led to some revival of social life in Kalmykia; first of all, Kalmyks began searching ways for their development. They started focusing on the need to put an end to the persecution of Kalmyk clergymen by authorities and infringement of their freedom of conscience. Agrarian controversies and restraints in the area of culture and education were of especial concern. In this connection, an educational movement was founded in Kalmykia comprising the Kalmyk intelligentsia, leading Russian teachers, doctors working in *uluses*, and representatives of the upper class (*zaisangs* and clergymen). An urgent problem was the pasture of “outside” cattle all over the Kalmyk steppe, which was examined at an assembly of cattle-breeders in 1903. In essence it was about the problem of Kalmyk borders.

Struggle for land was intensified between Kalmyk and Russian peasants, as well as between Kalmyk peasants and large-scale landlords in the revolutionary years (1905–1907). However, Soviet historians following the Marx–Lenin methodology considered this struggle a revolutionary peasant movement. We, however, believe that it was purely of economic nature for both parties, as the opposing parties did not involve any politics or political goals in their struggle.

During the period the Kalmyk national movement was taking shape for the first time and acquired the form of the Kalmyk People Banner, a union of Kalmyk teachers and public education figures, who joined the Federation for National and Territorial Teacher Unions of Russia in 1907. In addition to national renaissance and education of the people, “full self-determination of the Kalmyk people and autonomy”¹⁰⁷ was an objective of the Kalmyk People Banner as a national and democratic organization. The slogan about the territorial autonomy was not accidental. It became quite prevalent among intelligentsia of many peoples during the years, and it was a re-

quirement in the program of the Social Democratic Party as well as Constitutional Democratic Party as well for some time. Constitutional democrats used to back up aspirations to autonomy on the part of the national bourgeoisie from ethnic outskirts but when they became the governing party, they adhere to the tsarism positions about "one and indivisible" Russia.

World War I aggravated the social, economic, and political situation in the country and involved Kalmykia in the revolutionary events of 1917. Events in the Stavropol and Astrakhan *guberniya*, where new *guberniya*'s administrative bodies were formed—Committee for Public Security in the Stavropol *guberniya* and Provisional Administrative Committee in the Astrakhan *guberniya* (lieutenant-general I.N. Sokolovsky, who was the governor and Chief Guardian of the Kalmyk people at the same time, was arrested)—, affected the social and political situation. The Provisional Government abolished local tsarist administration offices and institutions and introduced the institution of commissars. Cossack general I.A. Biryukov was appointed the Provisional Government representative (commissar) to the Astrakhan *guberniya* and large-scale landlord A.I. Kukhtin was appointed to the Stavropol *guberniya*.¹⁰⁸

The first congress of Kalmyk people representatives took place on the initiative of the Astrakhan Provisional Administrative Committee in Astrakhan on March 26–31, 1917. Over 100 delegates from all *uluses* and most *aimaks* took part in the congress. Its key objective was to set up new authorities and discuss the procedure for administration in the Kalmyk steppe. The congress abolished the guardianship system first of all and replaced it with local self-government to be formed through elections and on the basis of the universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret voting. The Provisional Government raised the issue of autonomy at the congress in a very cautious and covert form because it could not dare to build a federative state and provide ethnic *oblasts* with autonomy.

The congress defined a system of central and local bodies to be acting until the final solution was taken on the self-government problem and on the principles of their formation. The congress formed a Central Committee for the Kalmyk People's Administration, which was now the central body of Kalmykia's administration and comprised a chairman, four candidates, and five members. *Ulus* (from three to six members and two candidates) and *aimak* (at least three members and two candidates) executive committees to be elected by *ulus* and *aimak* congresses, respectively, were to be set up at the local level.

The aforesaid congress also formed a new state body for Kalmykia's administration, i.e. the Central Committee for the Kalmyk People's Ad-

ministration (CCKPA) in the Astrakhan territory comprising its chairman B.E. Krishtafovich (former Kalmyk People's Administrator), members—lawyers Nomto Ochirov and Sandzhi Bayanov, *noyon* Danzan Tundutov and *zaisang* Badma-Ara Shonkhorov, and candidates—*noyon* Temir Tyumen, *zaisang* Bolta Sarangov, veterinarian Ordasha Boskhomdzhiyev, doctor Sangadzhi-Garya Khadylov, and veterinarian Nadbit Dulakhanov.

Local congresses elected *ulus* and *aimak* executive committees comprising mainly the former *ulus* and *aimak* administration in April–July 1917. The CCKPA resolution approved all of the members of *ulus* and *aimak* executive committees that were elected at the congresses. The *ulus* police guard was replaced with *ulus* militia. *Ulus* and *aimak* executive committees lasted until *zemstvos* were introduced, that is, until September of 1917.

The major goal of the CCKPA was to ensure normal operation of the new system of provisional control authorities until the all-Russian Constituent Assembly, which was to examine the draft of “emergency measures in the field of self-government, court, land, their economy and culture,” as well as to propagate education among the Kalmyk steppe population.¹⁰⁹

A distinctive feature of the new Kalmyk authorities, of the ways they were formed, and of the principles of their operation and interaction with the *guberniya*'s authorities was that they were autonomous institutions incorporated into the Astrakhan *kray*,^{viii} which were neither regulated by legislation, nor approved by the Provisional Government. In spite of this situation, they were entitled to control the Kalmyk people independently and communicate with central authorities directly. The Astrakhan *guberniya*'s commissar, I.A. Biryukov, informed head of the Provisional Government, Prince Georgiy Yevgeniyevich Lvov, on May 3, 1917 that the Central Committee for the Kalmyk People's Administration was operating independently of the *guberniya*'s authorities and was entitled to communicate with central authorities directly.¹¹⁰ At the same time, representatives from Kalmykia were able to take part in solving general problems of the *guberniya*.

As a result of the bourgeois democratic revolution, ideas of the Kalmyk autonomy expressed in resolutions issued by two congresses (March and June 1917) where Kalmyk representatives took part were not implemented. The Provisional Government failed to support the urge of ethnic

^{viii} Translator's note: *kray*—a large administrative and territorial unit of Russia. Historically, these areas were frontier zones of the Russian Empire.

oblasts for freedom and national equality, and turned down the democratic right of the Kalmyk people to autonomy. It agreed to introduce an *oblast's zemstvo* within the organizational structure of the *guberniya*, and only within the effective administrative and territorial borders, that is, in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* (Stavropol *guberniya*) and Kalmyk steppe (Astrakhan *guberniya*) separately.

However, the Provisional Government was implementing the idea of delimitating state administration and *zemstvo* self-government as a fundamental principle of building a democratic society importunately. According to the principle, governmental commissars were in charge of state administration in *guberniyas*, *oblasts*, and ethnic *oblasts*, while *zemstvo* institutions were to be in charge of economical and other local issues in them. The Central Committee for Kalmyk People's Administration took the principle in the negative, but was striving to preserve the state apparatus by combining it with local self-government. The Committee's idea could be accomplished in case of autonomy. The Provisional Government clearly expressed its position about the Kalmyk autonomy as follows: "Cultural self-determination does not imply state autonomy."¹¹¹

Under such circumstances, the CCKPA made an attempt to implement Kalmyk autonomy and introduced a notion of a "Steppe *oblast* of the Kalmyk people" corresponding to the idea of *oblasts* prevalent in some parts of Russia. In fact, the Kalmyk steppe and the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* remained under administrative control of the Astrakhan and Stavropol *guberniyas* since this was the Astrakhan and Stavropol *guberniya's* commissars that were in charge of the governmental supervision of the Kalmyk people.

At the same time, the Provisional Government took into consideration some ethnic issues when reforming the local administrative system, and assumed an individual approach to each ethnic *oblast*. Meeting the CCKPA halfway, it passed a resolution to make the Kalmyk steppe an independent *zemstvo* unit not accountable to the Astrakhan *guberniya's zemstvo*. According to the Provisional Government's decree of July 1, 1917, the Kalmyk steppe acquired the status of an *oblast (guberniya) zemstvo*. In this connection, the Provisional Government resolved as follows:

1. To introduce the regulations concerning *zemstvo* institutions in the *guberniya* and *uyezds* and provisional regulations on the *volost zemstvo* administration in the territories in the Astrakhan *guberniya* where Kalmyks roam.

2. To detach one *aimak* from the Terek *oblast* and attach it to the territory allocated for Astrakhan Kalmyks.

3. To make the Kalmyk territory equal to the adjacent *guberniyas* as to the local administration and economy.

4. To name the territorial administration "Kalmyk Steppe *Zemstvo* Administration" with the headquarters in the settlement of Elista.

5. To make *uluses* in the Kalmyk steppe equal to *uyezd* administrations and refer to them as *ulus* administrations.¹¹²

On July 1, 1917 the Provisional Government passed a similar resolution on the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, where *zemstvo* institutions were introduced as a part of the Stavropol *guberniya*.

The congress of Kalmyk representatives examined the problems of forming the *oblast's* and *ulus zemstvo* institutions (assemblies and councils) on July 25, 1917. According to the regulations about elections, the congress formed six *zemstvo* districts (Maloderbetovskiy, Manychskiy, Yandyko-Mochazhnyi, Erketenevskiy with the Kuma *aimak*, Ikitsokhuro-Kharakhusovskiy, and Bagatsokhuro-Khoshoutovskiy with the Kalmyk Bazaar), instead of eight *uluses*.

Elections of councilors for *ulus zemstvo* assemblies were held in September and October 1917 (in the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, they were held in August); upon their completion, they intended to convene the first *zemstvo* assembly to elect councilors to the *oblast's zemstvo* and form the the *oblast's* council.

However, the formation of *zemstvo* institutions was not completed because of the lack of organization of *ulus* and *aimak* executive committees, the desire of a part of Kalmyks to join Cossacks and revolutionary events in the center.

Declarations made by the Provisional Government were an important step towards the rule of law and formation of a civil society in Russia. In its first document—*Declaration on the membership and objectives of the Provisional Government* of March 3, 1917—it set the following goal: immediate preparation for convening the Constituent Assembly on the basis of universal, equal, direct, and secret voting, which was to solve all problems related to the state system of Russia, determine the form of government, adopt a constitution and elect permanent state administration bodies, as well as organize and conduct local self-government elections on the same basis. Unfortunately, the Provisional Government said nothing of ethnic problems; it merely declared that all restrictions based on ethnicity were abolished.

In order to prepare draft *Regulations on the elections for the Constituent Assembly*, the Provisional Government established a special committee chaired by famous lawyer F.F. Kokoshkin on March 25, 1917. The committee prepared and delivered to the Provisional Government the final version of the draft Regulations by the end of September 1917 (the last, third chapter was approved by the government on September 23). The *Regulations on the elections for the Constituent Assembly* became one of the most democratic election acts for the population of the country to form, as chairman of the Provisional Government G.Ye. Lvov said, "the higher body of people's state will, which will crown the great Russian revolution and elaborate all the foundations for the life of our free and democratic state in the future."¹³ According to the Regulations, the Constituent Assembly was to be formed from "members elected by the population based on the universal (without any sex distinctions) and equal electoral right by direct election and ballot voting with the use of proportional representation principles."¹⁴

By securing the most democratic principles of people's participation in the elections of the Constituent Assembly, these Regulations introduced a proportional election system by lists of candidates to be nominated by political parties or groups of electors comprising at least 100 persons. The Regulations also stipulated a possibility to hold the elections based on the majority system, especially in ethnic *oblasts* (a candidate was considered to be elected in the *oblast* if he received a majority of the electors' votes). It was for the first time in the history of the Russian electoral law when restrictions by settlement or literacy as well as by property, ethnicity, or religion were lifted. By setting 20 years as the minimum age for all electors, the Regulations on the elections provided electoral rights for women, servicemen (except for deserters or servicemen found guilty of criminal actions), and monks. The Regulations stipulated a number of guarantees for non-Russian population to participate in the elections. For example, Article 60 of the *Regulations on the elections to the Constituent Assembly* said that it was possible to translate the text of the list of candidates included into the electoral reports (ballot papers) to any vernacular language specified by the group that provided the list.

By making the elections much more democratic, the lawmakers restricted electoral rights for a certain category of electors. They compiled a rather extensive list of people deprived of the right to participate in elections. Deaf and dumb people, mentally disabled people, and people under guardianship, convicts, exiles, etc., insolvents and members of the tsar's family were deprived of any active or passive electoral rights.

For the purposes of holding the election to the Constituent Assembly, the territory of Russia was subdivided into territorial electoral districts on the basis of administrative and territorial units (*guberniyas* and ethnic *oblasts*). A special Pricaspian electoral district was set up that included the Kalmyk steppe populated by nomadic Kalmyks within the Astrakhan *guberniya* for the elections to the Constituent Assembly (at first the *aimak* of Kuma Kalmyks in the Terek *oblast* formed a part of the Astrakhan electoral district, and later became a part of the Pricaspian one).

The Pricaspian *oblast* commission for the Constituent Assembly election established on September 16, 1917 by the Central Committee for the Kalmyk People's Administration was in charge of preparing and holding the elections to the Constituent Assembly. According to the Regulations about elections, the commission comprised chairman B.E. Krishtafovich, CCKPA chairman; members I.O. Ochirov, assistant CCKPA chairman, S.B. Bayanov, CCKPA member, E.A. Sarangov, candidate for CCKPA members, and E.S. Bakayev, chairman of the Kalmyk Bazaar *aimak* executive committee; secretary F.I. Plyunov, CCKPA secretary. According to Article 162 of the Regulations about election and upon instruction of the Saratov judicial division, member of the Astrakhan district court A.I. Istomin and justices of the peace, Astrakhan city district A.I. Biryukov and I.P. Ponomaryov, became extra members of the Pricaspian the *oblast's* electoral commission.

The same day, September 23, the *oblast's* electoral commission formed 52 electoral districts in the territory of the Pricaspian electoral region (in Maloderbetovsky *ulus* ten districts, in the Manytsky *ulus* ten districts, in the Yandyko-Mochaznyi *ulus* seven, in the Ikitsokhuro-Kharakhusovsky 12, in the Bagatsokhuro-Khoshoutovsky and Erketenevsky *uluses* nine, and in the Kuma *aimak* of the Terek *oblas* four districts).¹¹⁵ *Aimak* territories laid the basis for electoral districts. *Ulus* executive committees created electoral commissions comprising four members including a chairman and secretary in electoral districts. Moreover, one representative from each group of electors to have made the list of candidates and specify its representative to the commission could be made a part of district electoral commissions. *Aimak* administration compiled and checked up lists of electors and staffed electoral districts in October of 1917.

The Pricaspian *oblast's* electoral commission examined candidates to the all-Russian Constituent Assembly on October 13, 1917. The list of candidates signed by 137 electors comprised only one candidate—33 year-old Sandzhi Bayanovich Bayanov, a lawyer from the Saratov judicial

division living in Astrakhan. Prince Temir Batikovich Tyumen, who was the first one to sign the list of electors in his support, represented a group that nominated S.B. Bayanov as a candidate. Finally, the Pricaspian electoral commission registered Sandzhi Bayanovich Bayanov who had a higher legal education (he graduated from the legal department, Saint-Petersburg University) as an official candidate to the all-Russian Constituent Assembly in the Pricaspian electoral district on October 19, 1917.

The elections for the Constituent Assembly scheduled by the Provisional Government for November 12–14, 1917 were held mainly in time. However, the Regulations about elections provided for extension of the period of voting in individual electoral districts. According to the Regulations, the Pricaspian *oblast's* electoral commission took into consideration the delay in the preparation of electoral documents and remoteness of electoral districts and resolved to hold the voting for the candidate for members of the Constituent Assembly in the Pricaspian electoral district on November 26–28, 1917.¹¹⁶

The election of a Kalmyk representative for the Constituent Assembly in the 52 electoral districts of the Pricaspian electoral region lasted for three days—on November 26, 27, and 28. The voters' turnout was very low at some polling stations. For example, only 150 electors out of 1,084 (14%) took part in the elections in the Ovordytsky electoral district (Ovordytsky *aimak*, Erketenevsky *ulus*), in the Tsagan-Nursky electoral district (Maloderbetovsky *ulus*) 701 electors out of 2,196 (32%), and in the Central electoral district of the same *ulus* 603 electors out of 1,600 (38%).¹¹⁷ According to Article 88 of the Regulations, elections were considered valid in the electoral district if at least one tenth of the total number of voters took part in the ballot. Judging by the available minutes of district electoral commissions, the elections of a member of the Constituent Assembly in the territory of the Kalmyk steppe were valid. A majority of voters from the Pricaspian electoral district voted for S.B. Bayanov. Thus, it was Sandzhi Bayanovich Bayanov who represented Kalmykia and was one of 707 members of the Constituent Assembly that declared Russia a democratic and federal republic on January 6, 1918.

The period of preparation for election for the Constituent Assembly and holding elections for the Kalmykia *zemstvo* concurred with practical actions taken by the Kalmyk steppe authorities aimed at incorporating the Kalmyk people into the Cossack class. The issue of converting Kalmyks into the Cossack class was finally resolved at the constituent conference of the Southeastern Union of Cossack Troops, Caucasus Mountain Peoples, and Free Steppe Peoples on October 16–20, 1917. Then the first

Kalmyk–Cossack congress was held on November 14. It renamed the CCKPA into the army government headed by B.E. Krishtafovich and the *oblast's zemstvo* assembly into a small legislative army district (though it was not formed by the time). *Ulus zemstvo* administrations became districts headed by district *atamans*. S.B. Bayanov was appointed as a representative for the Southeast union's government; D.D. Tundutov was elected as assistant to I.A. Biryukov (Astrakhan Cossack Army *ataman*) to be in charge of Kalmyk issues and was given the rank of colonel.¹¹⁸ The Kalmyk people found themselves drawn into a whirlpool of social and political opposition.

The Red Army defeated the Astrakhan Cossack Army with the Kalmyk Cossack unit as its part on January 25, 1918. Heads of the Kalmyk Army government joined the Cossack unit comprising 400 people and left for the Don via the Kalmyk steppe. It was the end of the government.

The remaining officials from the Central Committee for Kalmyk People Administration with its secretary F.I. Plyunov suggested recognizing the Soviet power on January 1918. The struggle for establishing the new power and its state administration bodies with Bolsheviks at the head in the Kalmyk steppe began.

* * *

Upon examining the key stages of the development of mutual relations between Kalmyks and Russia defined by the Russian state and Kalmyk *taishas'* policy depending on internal and external factors on both of the parties, we can conclude that the process of taking the Russian allegiance by Kalmyks was a long-term one and did not concur with the process of their naturalization in Russia. From the moment when the Russian allegiance was taken in the middle of the 17th century and until the time when Kalmyks acquired citizenship in the 1730–1760s, Kalmykia was attached to Russia by means of only one power technology, namely a military alliance and military duty. Russian politics, rather than its internal development, defined Kalmykia's legal status as a part of the Russian state. The great-power policy pursued by Russia made a great part of Kalmyks leave for Dzungaria in the second half of the 18th century, the Kalmyk Khanate being abolished as a result.

At the early stage of their contacts, Kalmyks aspired to establish their political relations with Russia based on the suzerainty and vassalage principles, but the parties were to be the sovereign. Under the conditions of political relations like these, Kalmyk *taishas* were prepared to recognize

the hierarchy, where they would be under the supreme control of the Russian tsar. The Russian authorities, in their turn, were interested in accepting Kalmyks on the conditions of their allegiance without delay, that is, they wanted to establish relations that would meet both political and economic interests of Russia and are in line with the current Russian political development.

Taking into consideration all circumstances of the Kalmyk social development, Russia was gradually incorporating Kalmyks until the middle of the 17th century. In fact, Russia established a type of vassalage relations with the Kalmyks although written *sherts* would always use the term “allegiance.” On the one hand, economic relations (provision of territories and payment of the tribute) formed the basis of the union. On the other hand, they were based on political grounds (Russian patronage and loyal service of Kalmyks).

Starting from the 1620s, the tsarist administration was trying to change the legal type of relations with Kalmyks that were seeking patronage rather than allegiance. The tsarist administration was persistently pursuing its policy based on the principle of “direct and everlasting bond slavery.” The firm position of Russia and the need to establish new relations that Kalmyks (who were penetrating deep into its territory) were aware of resulted in the signing of a *shert* on “eternal obedience” in the middle of the 17th century (on February 4, 1655) and then (within two years) a *shert* about state allegiance. While the wording of their relations—“to be in eternal obedience”—stated in previous *sherts* (both oral and written) was rather vague and based on the vassalage principles (“under the great tsar’s control”) that were mainly outlived in Russia by the time, the new *shert* instrument of 1657 provided a specific wording (“to be in eternal allegiance and obedience”) and reflected the formula of the “sovereign–slave” relations that expressed the nature of the autocratic monarchy.

However, by virtue of the special position determined by statutory and contractual principles at free will of both parties, the Kalmyk Khanate had a special status—political autonomy. All issues of political and military nature between Russia and the Khanate were regulated through authorized envoys of the parties having the status of ambassadors.

Pursuing the policy aimed at restricting the Kalmyk rulers’ power and controlling them, the tsar administration started resolving Kalmyk issues from a rather different position beginning with the 1730s: as if Kalmyk leaders of respective administrative and territorial units had been subordinated to it in the first place. Kalmykia was finally incorporated into the common Russian Empire’s administrative system in the 1760s. This

meant that Kalmyk power institutions were subordinate to the tsarist administration and Kalmyk society classes were made equal to the estates in the Russian society in their status. As a result, Kalmyks actually became citizens of the Russian Empire. We cannot regard the policy pursued by tsarist authorities as “accidental” or typical only in the case of the Kalmyk Khanate. It was rather a part of the general policy that the Russian Empire pursued with regard to its non-Russian peoples in the second part of the 18th century.

After the exodus of a major part of Kalmyks from Russia the Kalmyk statehood was abolished. After having been a member of Russia for a long time, Kalmykia started losing its independence gradually in administration and in making and implementing legislation. This was also an outcome of a purposeful policy pursued by the state. Kalmykia was becoming a special administrative and territorial unit incorporated into the Astrakhan *guberniya*. The Kalmyk people were an ethnos disunited in terms of their territorial and administrative status in the early 20th century. The February Bourgeois Democratic Revolution failed to satisfy the need of the Kalmyk people in autonomy. The Kalmyk people were disunited and could not see any prospects of their development. That is why the national policy that Bolsheviks proclaimed was appealing to them. This policy found a breeding ground and active supporters among public figures, in particular the Kalmyk working intelligentsia that was close to the masses and enjoyed their confidence.

Notes

- 1 N.N. Palmov. *Essay on the history of Kalmyk people as a part of Russia*. 2nd edition. Elista, 1992. 116.
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CHAPTER 4

The Kalmyk Soviet Autonomous *Oblast* in the Years of Socialism Building (1917–1935)

The October Revolution of 1917 and Soviet power opened a new page in the history of Kalmykia and its statehood. Modern history turned out to be complicated and controversial—with both positive and negative aspects. It was directly related to the nationalities policy of Bolsheviks, which involved departures from their program and ideology when it came to the practical implementation of these.

When the Soviet power was established in the Astrakhan *guberniya* in January 1918 and its state authorities were formed, the new Astrakhan administration recognized the Kalmyk steppe as a special administrative and territorial entity that was a part of the *guberniya* with its own political institutions to be formed by the Kalmyk population. According to this provision, delegates from three *uluses* and the Kalmyk Bazaar settlement formed a provisional central body of the Soviet Kalmyk steppe—the Kalmyk section of the executive committee, Astrakhan provincial soviet—on March 5, 1918. The provincial executive committee approved of the following membership of the section: Chairman—Erendzhen Khara-Davan; members—Konstantin Nikitin, Arasha Chapchayev, and Ochir Eldyashev; candidate members—Vadim Mergasov, Dordzhi Tugayev, and Kebyud Dalgayev.

The establishment of the provisional central Soviet power body by the middle of 1918 completed the first stage in the formation of governmental authorities in the Kalmyk steppe in the form of the Kalmyk section as well as *ulus* and *aimak* soviets. The establishment of the highest state authority in the Kalmyk steppe and development of legal and organizational norms and principles to form all Soviet power echelons in the context of the local situation was the order of the day. As a result, it became possible to start

solving problems of the Kalmyk national statehood based on the Bolsheviks' national program.

The Bolshevik party appreciated the importance of the national movement and wished to make the best use of it. In its policy documents published in the pre-revolutionary period, the party had suggested that the national question should be solved in a fair way. According to the documents, Bolsheviks projected to provide all peoples and nationalities with absolute freedom and equality, local democratic self-government on a broad scale; they were also going to offer *oblast* autonomy to those administrative and territorial entities that had a specific ethnic composition and way of life.

As soon as Bolsheviks assumed power in October 1917, they proclaimed liberty and equality for all the peoples.

The very first document adopted by the Second All-Russian Congress of Soviets on October 26, 1917—an appeal entitled *To Workers, Soldiers and Peasants!*—said that the Soviet power “will provide all peoples living in Russia with the right to self-determination.”¹ The *Declaration of Rights of the Peoples of Russia* adopted on November 2 legislated the basic principles of the national policy to be pursued by the Soviet state: “The Soviet of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom) has decreed to adopt the following principles as the basis for its activities with regard to the nationalities in Russia:

1. Equality and sovereignty of all peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination including separating and establishing a separate state.
3. Abolition of all national and religious privileges and restrictions.
4. Free development of national minorities and ethnic groups residing in the territory of Russia.

All specific measures arising from the above-mentioned declaration are to be decreed immediately upon the formation of a special commission for nationalities.”²

The legal basis for the national policy and national state building was formed gradually by decrees and declarations, thus supplementing and developing the political program of Bolsheviks. The *Declaration of the Rights of the Working and Exploited People* adopted by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets in January 1918 was one of the key documents. It legislated the forms of government and state structure by proclaiming the following: “Russia is proclaimed a Republic of Soviets” founded “on the principle of a free union of free nations, as a federation of Soviet national republics.” Clause 8, Chapter 4 emphasized that endeavor-

ing to create a really free and voluntary, and therefore a firm and stable union of working classes of all peoples of Russia, the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets confined to setting up the fundamental principles of a federation of Soviet Republics of Russia, while leaving it to the workers and peasants of each people to decide independently “at their own authoritative Congress of Soviets whether they wished to participate in the federal government and in other Soviet federal institutions, and on what terms.”³

The Declaration related self-determination with the federation and defined that the Soviet Republic of Russia was a federation of Soviet national republics acting as its members. Thereby, one can see that the lawmakers stipulated that only national republics could be entities within Russia. However, having emphasized that only fundamentals of the federation were established, the Congress of Soviets left it to each nation to select a form of federal relations with the center on its own. The Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets elaborated the problems of the federation and federal relations in the Soviet Republics of Russia in the greatest detail in its resolution entitled *About Federal Institutions of the Republic of Russia*.

The resolution legislated as follows:

1. The Russian Socialist Soviet Republic is established on the basis of a voluntary union of peoples of Russia as a federation of Soviet republics of these peoples.
2. The supreme government authority in the federation is the All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and Cossacks' Delegates convened at least once every three months.
3. The All-Russian Congress of Soviets of Workers', Soldiers', Peasants', and Cossacks' Delegates elects the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee is the supreme organ in-between the congresses.
4. The Government of the Federation, the Soviet of People's Commissars, is elected and dismissed in full or in part by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets or the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.
5. The mode of participation in the federal government of individual *oblast*-based Soviet Republics and of the *oblasts* with a specific way of life and ethnic composition, along with the delimitation of powers between the federal and *oblast* authorities of the Russian Republic shall be stipulated immediately upon the formation of the *oblast*-based Soviet Republics by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Central Executive Committees of these republics.

6. All local issues shall be managed exclusively by local soviets. Supreme Soviets are entitled to regulate relations between inferior soviets and resolve any disputes between them. The central Soviet authorities shall monitor the compliance with the fundamental principles of the federation and represent the Russian Federation of Soviets on the whole. The central authorities shall also be in charge of holding events, which can be implemented at the federal level only, however without violating the rights of individual *oblasts* joining the federation.
7. The Central Executive Committee of Soviets must elaborate these principal provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federative Republic to introduce them at the next Congress of Soviets.⁴

We think that this resolution should be regarded as an essentially constitutional document. It provides exact definitions for the system and parts of both federal state authorities (the All-Russian Congress of Soviets and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee as the supreme organ in-between the congress sessions; the Soviet of People's Commissars as the Government) and those of national republics (soviets and their Central Executive Committees). Giving the shape of the key principles for the federative system of the Russian Republic, the lawmakers also laid the basis for a unitary state—strict subordination and vertical accountability of the state authorities. The resolution defined the principles for distribution of powers and competences among federal authorities and members (federal, joint, and local) as well as the principles of their relations in general terms.

As compared to the regulatory documents passed earlier, this document delimited the powers among the members of the Russian Federative Republic in a greater detail. First of all, "Soviet republics of individual *oblasts*" (this actually meant national republics because the formation of Central Executive Committees was stipulated) acted as its members, then the *oblasts* with a specific way of life and ethnic composition (autonomous *oblasts*), and administrative and territorial members were listed.

The Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic adopted by the Fifth All-Russian Congress of Soviets on July 10, 1918 formed the legal basis for the national and state building. The first section of the Constitution included the full text of the *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People* adopted by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets. The further sections developed and substantially supplemented both the Declaration and the principal provisions of the resolution adopted by the Third All-Russian Congress of Soviets.

It is necessary to pay special attention to Article 11 that stipulated the following: "The soviets of those *oblasts* with a specific way of life and ethnic composition may unite into autonomous *oblast* unions as well as any *oblast* associations ruled by the *oblast* congresses of the soviets and their executive organs.

These autonomous *oblast* unions shall participate in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic on a federal basis."⁵

It was for the first time when the article provided an exact legal definition of the members of the Russian Federative Republic—autonomous units and administrative *oblasts*. However, autonomous territories were to become parts of Russia on a federal basis, while administrative *oblasts*, though having the member status, were considered a part of Russia proper. In addition, the article specified the supreme authorities of autonomous *oblasts* (*oblast* congresses of soviets) as well as executive and administrative bodies—executive committees equivalent to *oblast* authorities by their status (Articles 53–56).

The General Provisions section of the Constitution described the basic principles of the national policy of the Soviet authorities. Recognizing equal rights for all citizens irrespective of their race or nationality, it stipulated that any privileges or advantages on this ground, or any oppression of ethnic minorities were against the fundamental laws of the Republic (Article 22). The Constitution guaranteed the federation members the observance of and compliance with principles of self-determination. In particular, Article 49 stipulated the right of "secession of any parts of the Russian Federation." Apparently, however, this constitutional provision represented merely a formal entry.

Two sections of the Constitution dealt with the system of authorities in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, specifying their competences and powers from the top level—the All-Russian Congress of Soviets—and to the *volost* congresses of soviets and rural soviets. The lawmakers specified all branches of authorities—the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, *oblast*, provincial, *uyezd* (district), and *volost* congresses of soviets and rural soviets—and all levels of administrative bodies (Sovnarkom and executive committees of soviets of all ranks), and established strict vertical subordination of inferior authorities to those of a higher rank. The Constitution placed the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and the Sovnarkom of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic at the top of the power pyramid and defined them as central, rather than federal authorities.

The supreme authorities as part of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic (RSFSR) were provided with virtually unlimited powers under Article 50 that stipulated, "In addition to the above-mentioned issues, the All-Russian Congress and All-Russian Central Executive Committee are in charge of all other affairs, which require their attention as they may decide." Moreover, the executive authority—Sovnarkom—was accountable to the All-Russian Congress and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee because the latter ones appointed it (Article 49, Clause 2).

Upon the examination of all above-mentioned principles of the system of state authorities in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, we may notice that these principles were sometimes confusing and even inconsistent. They did not meet the basics of a federative state in full comprising obvious unitary elements. First, the Constitution of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic established a strict vertical subordination of state authorities. Second, it provided the supreme state authorities with unlimited powers. Third, it defined the supreme authorities of the Russian Federation as central and not federal authorities. Fourth, it failed to stipulate the principle of separation of powers—legislative and executive ones (the Sovnarkom was an executive and regulatory authority of the All-Russian Congress and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee). Moreover, the Sovnarkom was provided with legislative powers, too.

Thus, we can see that it was the first Soviet Constitution that—apart from the federative principles—introduced the principal elements of a unitary state (which would become predominant later) into the state authorities system of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic.

Yet, for the sake of objectivity and fairness, we should say that the principles of voluntary association and formation of the federation, equality of all peoples and independence in solving their problems, heterogeneity of the members of the Russian Federative republic (national republics and autonomous *oblast* unions), and the right to secession—all these basic principles of the national and state building in the RSFSR were stipulated in its very first constitutional acts.

It is well known that these ideas were discredited in practice later. The RSFSR was formed not as a federation of national republics and *oblasts*, but as a merely formal federation, while a unitary state in actuality with a monopolized and centralized, command-administrative system of state power. The constitution-based state structure of the RSFSR was no more than a decorative façade for the genuine power agent—the Bolshevik party. Naturally, offences against the law, and the usurpation of power,

particularly in the time of Stalin's personality cult, had a negative impact on the RSFSR members' national and state building.

The Constitution of the RSFSR having been adopted, a state legal basis for the formation and development of autonomous *oblasts* was established. Therefore, it was not accidental that active preparations for establishing the autonomy of the Kalmyk people began since the second half of 1918.

From the very beginning of its operation, the Kalmyk section intended to form the Kalmyk administrative and territorial entity as a part of the Astrakhan *guberniya*, but including the villages of Russian and Ukrainian migrants located inside the Kalmyk steppe and nearby it. They suggested it be formed based on the territorial principle in the same way as some *guberniyas*, *uyezds*, and even *volosts* where republics, communes, etc. were formed in the first half of 1918. However, major cattle breeders rejected this project at a joint Russian–Kalmyk congress on May 14, 1918. The Astrakhan *Guberniya* Executive Committee rejected the Kalmyk section's initiative to form a Kalmyk state entity because it believed that the Kalmyk steppe was to remain a part of the *guberniya* as an *uyezd*. Members of the Kalmyk section lacked a consensus of opinions among themselves regarding this issue either. This resulted in a crisis (some of the members kept aloof from the work and gave up political activities altogether). Among the members of the section, there were also those who supported the policy pursued by the Provisional Government and aimed at building a civil society and democratic power institutions along with local self-government. They thought all economic and cultural events were to serve the interests of the entire society and to enable everyone “to forge their destiny on their own.”⁶

The First Congress of Soviets of the Working Kalmyk People held in Astrakhan on July 1–3, 1918 was the next stage to complete the process of establishing the Soviet power and lay the foundation for the future Soviet autonomy of Kalmykia. As a supreme state authority in Kalmykia, the Congress of Soviets formed the Kalmyk executive committee comprising eight members and five candidates. A.Ch. Chapchayev was elected the chairman of the Kalmyk executive committee; K.D. Nikitin became the assistant chairman. Though the Kalmyk executive committee was equal to *uyezd* executive committees by its legal status, it was the supreme authority in-between the congresses of Soviets in the territory of the Kalmyk steppe. Departmental authorities such as legal, land, public health, public education, food, financial, and national departments subordinate to the People's Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities (Narkomnats) of the RSFSR (chaired by A.G. Maslov) were also established.

The Congress examined the situation with the food industry in the Kalmyk steppe and discussed the establishment of new courts. The executive committee suggested taking measures aimed at providing the population with bread, Kalmyk tea, and other essential commodities. They instructed to establish a people's court in each *ulus* and initiate elections of people's judges and assessors. According to decrees on courts issued by the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR on November 22, 1917 and February 15, 1918, the *ulus* soviets were to establish new courts comprising a regular judge and two people's assessors. The Congress adopted a resolution about requisition of horses for the needs of the Red Army by means of *ulus* allotment "between bourgeois elements"⁷ on the final day of its work.

The situation in the Kalmyk steppe aggravated substantially due to the onset of the Civil War by the autumn of 1918. Kalmyks were also involved in this socially and politically motivated armed conflict. On the one hand, rich and well-to-do people (Danzan Tundutov, who headed the Astrakhan Cossack Army) formed a part of the White Cossack Don Army; on the other hand, poor people served in the Red Army. Bolsheviks and military structures of the Soviet power managed to carry out mobilization among Kalmyks, form Kalmyk military units, and send them to the operating army. Moreover, Kalmyks were obliged to provide the Red Army units passing through Kalmykia with horses and cattle for food and transportation purposes. As many as 2,176 horses (apart from the horses taken by their owners drafted into the army) were requisitioned in the Kalmyk steppe in May through October 1918. The number of sheep was beyond calculation at all. Due to the severe consequences of the requisition, the Soviet Kalmyk authorities had to apply to the central Soviet and military authorities for putting an end to the unsystematic requisition of the Kalmyk cattle. A non-recurrent revolution tax of eight million rubles was imposed then. The only possibility to pay this amount was to sell a huge number of cattle.

The complicated military and economic situation determined the agenda of the Second Congress of Soviets of Working Kalmyk People, which was held on September 22–25, 1918. The Congress adopted resolutions on drafting Kalmyk workers to the Red Army, recognizing cattle as the national patrimony of the Kalmyk people, and nationalizing the largest estates. Thus, the congress laid the legal basis for the first economic changes in compliance with the 1918 Constitution of the RSFSR, and made the key branch of the Kalmyk economy the state property.

The Second Congress of Soviets of Working Kalmyk People elected its executive committee by open vote. The committee comprised eight mem-

bers and three candidates despite the resolution that provided for ten committee members. By its numerical strength, the Kalmyk executive committee was not a provincial, *oblast*, or *uyezd* committee but was equal to a *volost* one. According to the 1918 Constitution of the RSFSR (Article 55), the following norms for the numerical strength of executive committees were stipulated: *oblast* and provincial committees—25 members; *uyezd* committees—20 people; *volost* committees—10 members.

A.Ch. Chapchayev and K.D. Nikitin were reelected the chairman and assistant chairman of the Kalmyk Executive Committee, respectively. G.M. Mankirov became the treasurer. F.I. Plyunov was appointed the secretary of the executive committee by the order of the Kalmyk Executive Committee. The Kalmyk Executive Committee's departments remained the same except for some changes in their titles.

Actions taken by the Kalmyk section, the congresses of soviets, and the Kalmyk Executive Committee enhanced the formation of the Soviet Kalmyk system. The system of Soviet authorities in the Kalmyk steppe comprised eight *uluses*, one village, and 49 *aimak* soviets of the working Kalmyk people by September–October 1918.

The first occasion (since 1907) for Kalmyk representatives to take part in sessions of a Russian supreme state authority as full members presented itself in November 1918. On October 29, 1918 the Kalmyk Executive Committee adopted a resolution on delegating two Kalmyk representatives to the All-Russian Congress of Soviets to be held on November 5, 1918 in Moscow. There were two delegates (A.M. Amur-Sanan and A.G. Meshcheryakov) among 1,296 delegates of the Fourth All-Russian Congress of Soviets. They were elected directly by the Kalmyk Executive Committee, although according to the Constitution of the RSFSR they were to be elected by the provincial congress of soviets.⁸ This confirms that, despite the numerical strength of the Kalmyk Executive Committee and its indefinite status, the Kalmyk steppe was considered an independent administrative and territorial entity similar to an *oblast* with a specific way of life and ethnic composition.

First of all, the Kalmyk Soviet authorities initiated economic changes. Under the constitutional provision regarding the land nationalization and *Decree on Land Socialization* of February 18, 1918, departments of *ulus* and *aimak* executive committees in charge of land analyzed the situation in the sphere of land utilization, accounted non-labor farms and developed projects on equal land and cattle re-allotment based on labor norms. However, the First Kalmyk Congress of *ulus* land departments held on October 9–11, 1918 and chaired by the Bolshevik As-

trakhan *Guberniya* Executive Committee virtually reduced the possibilities for developing private property in agricultural Kalmykia to nothing. The Congress introduced the following labor norms: for cattle-breeding farms—four head of bovine cattle and six head of small cattle; for combined (crop farming and cattle breeding) farms—half of that. Based on the actual possibilities for the development of private property in cattle breeding, *aimak* land departments suggested increasing the norms up to 25 and 100 head, respectively. The norms provided by the congress for land departments were aimed at the establishment of small-size individual farms, which were doomed to failure. Perhaps, it was not accidental that the Congress planned to found cattle breeding communes and transfer large-scale cattle breeding to the poorest part of the population. This was happening at that time when the course towards establishing collective farms was adopted in compliance with the above-mentioned *Decree on Land Socialization*. In this respect, we can agree with A.I. Naberukhin, who gave a positive assessment to the soviets' activities writing in the autumn of 1918: "The Kalmyk Executive Committee and its local authorities supported the Soviet power and were working hard to implement the very first socialist transformations."⁹

The Third Congress of the Soviets of Working Kalmyk People held on December 19–December 22, 1918 launched the final stage in the building of Soviet Kalmykia. Committees of the poor ceased functioning as power authorities by that time. The soviets assumed power in villages. The Congress of Soviets examined the outcomes of the nation and state building and of cultural development in the Kalmyk steppe along with the local economic situation, and concluded that it would be premature to provide Kalmykia with the rights of an *oblast*-level autonomy until the Civil War was over. In connection with the resolution, the Congress confirmed the *uyezd* status of the Kalmyk steppe as a part of the Astrakhan *guberniya*.

The reelection of members of the Kalmyk Executive Committee was one of the most important issues for the formation of power authorities. The Congress made a decision to increase the number of executive committee members from 10 to 15, including 10 people from among the delegates by open voting, and to co-opt Bolsheviks from the Astrakhan provincial committee, the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) for the remaining five seats. Thirteen candidates were nominated to run for ten seats in the Kalmyk Executive Committee.

The congress elected A.M. Amur-Sanan, A.Ch. Chapchayev, K.D. Nikitin, A.P. Mezhuiev-Samokhin, N.D. Dulakhanov, M.M. Mandzhiyev,

E.A. Sarangov, S.G. Khadylov, A.G. Maslov, and G.N. Natyrov members of the Kalmyk Executive Committee by open voting. The Astrakhan provincial committee of the Russian Communist Party co-opted Bolsheviks Ye. Dvoretzky, M.V. Lifanov, Terekhin, Khatyushenko, and Shagarov as members of the Kalmyk Executive Committee. When they became the members, a party nucleus was established in the Executive Committee in February 1919. Thus, the undivided control over soviets on the part of the Communist Party was first established. State and party authorities began to amalgamate and the constitutional principles of forming state authorities were thus violated.

The Presidium of the Kalmyk Executive Committee comprised three members: A.Ch. Chapchayev (chairman), K.D. Nikitin (vice-chairman), and F.I. Plyunov (secretary). The departmental administrative bodies remained the same with the exception of the internal administration department, where a militia unit was established on December 25, 1918. Two commissions—on culture and education, and an editorial commission—were formed. A soviet for people's economy was formed somewhat later, on February 1, 1919.¹⁰

After the end of 1918, the control administered by People's Commissariat for Interior Affairs (NKVD) over the Soviet building in Kalmykia and over appropriate implementation of decrees issued by the central authorities was intensified to a significant extent. An instructor from the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs, A.N. Sokolov participated in the Third Congress of Soviets of Working Kalmyk People with a similar mission. Apart from auditing the local authorities and rendering assistance to them, the objective of NKVD instructors was to exercise control over the establishment and consolidation of a common centralized system of Soviet authorities, the former assignments secondary with regard to the latter.

Many Soviet institutions took part in the practical resolution of problems related to the state policy for national development and nationalities policy. At the same time, there was a specialized governmental authority entrusted with dealing with these problems—the People's Commissariat for the Affairs of Nationalities in the RSFSR (Narkomnats). The Narkomnats was in charge of implementing a crucial task—"to enhance Russia's national unity based on new socialist foundations."¹¹ In compliance with this major goal, the activities carried out by the Narkomnats of the RSFSR were aimed at rendering assistance to national districts in developing and strengthening the Soviet power, and in developing their economy, culture, and statehood.

The basis for the Narkomnats was formed on a “nationality principle,” which meant that its major structural parts were national commissariats or departments. By the end of 1918, the Narkomnats comprised 17 national commissariats and departments that represented the most numerous peoples of Soviet Russia. In March 1918, the Narkomnats established a Kyrgyz department (headed by Mukhamediar Tungachin), which was to represent Kalmyk people’s interests in the Narkomnats on a provisional basis. Under the resolution adopted by the Second Congress of Soviets on September 24, 1918 and by the consent of the Narkomnats, a Kalmyk department was established in the middle of October 1918 (its first plenipotentiaries were A.G. Meshcheryakov and N.K. Korsikov),¹² which became a link between the Kalmyk Executive Committee and the government of the RSFSR.

The national commissariats and national departments of the Narkomnats of the RSFSR pursued the following major goals: 1) informing the Soviet authorities about needs of specific peoples; 2) informing the peoples about the first steps and measures taken by the Soviet authorities; 3) meeting cultural and educational needs of the peoples in question with the help of the Soviet authorities; 4) carrying out propaganda measures to promote the Soviet ideology among the people on a broad scale; 5) resolving conflicts between the Soviet authorities and the peoples; 6) based on the principles of the Soviet Constitution, elaborating principles and regulations for the administrative and territorial autonomy where specific economic and territorial conditions require such measures.¹³

Since the objectives of the Narkomnats became more complex, and under an order entitled *About National Schools and Relations between People’s Commissariats for Education and Nationalities* issued by the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR on July 13, 1918, a national section was established within the People’s Commissariat for Education (Narkompros). One representative per each national commissariat and Narkomnats’ departments was included in the section, each of the members endowed with the right of the casting vote. The Narkomnats was entrusted with administering all issues related to education among ethnic minorities. The national section was to be involved in organizing a preschool and school system for all peoples comprised by the RSFSR. The People’s Commissariat for Education also had a department of education for ethnic minorities, which was in charge of all cultural and educational institutions of ethnic minorities.¹⁴

The report of October 27, 1918 presented to the Narkomnats by A.G. Meshcheryakov defined major goals for the Kalmyk department: promoting socialist ideas among the Kalmyk people, facilitating cultural

and educational development, improving the economic well-being of the people, regulating land management in the Kalmyk society and with the Russian peasantry, developing a provision about the national and territorial autonomy.

Almost simultaneously with the Kalmyk department of the Narkomnats, the Kalmyk section was formed as a part of the national department of the Astrakhan *Guberniya* Executive Committee in March 1919. However, it was abolished in October of the same year because its functions were very similar to those performed by the Kalmyk Executive Committee.

In the second half of 1918 and in early 1919, the Soviet authorities of Kalmykia headed by Bolsheviks took actions aimed at developing a political system under the new state power, establishing a basis of socialist economy, and drafting the poorest part of the population to the Red Army. At the same time, trade unions, party organizations, communes (collective enterprises) specializing mainly in cattle breeding, and cooperative associations were being formed in Kalmyk *uluses*. The cattle that belonged to large cattle owners was registered and transferred to executive committees of *aimak* soviets.

Under these favorable conditions, the Kalmyk Executive Committee intensified its efforts aimed at the formation of an autonomous *oblast*. On February 14, 1919 it established a commission comprising executive committee presidium members A.M. Amur-Sanan, S.-G. Khadylov, F.I. Plyunov, and secretary of the social security department Bukhartsev to elaborate the issues related to advancing the status of the Kalmyk steppe from *uyezd* to *oblast*. At the same time, a commission comprising A.M. Amur-Sanan, S.-G. Khadylov, and a member of the Astrakhan *Guberniya* Executive Committee named Popov, was formed to establish the Kalmyk party organization.¹⁵

Following the instruction given by the Kalmyk Executive Committee, A.M. Amur-Sanan presented a memorandum to the Narkomnats of the RSFSR on April 17, 1919 concerning the need to convene a constitutive congress to proclaim Kalmyk autonomy. In addition, he suggested that personal security be guaranteed to all delegates regardless of their political opinions. Based on this idea, the Kalmyk Executive Committee applied to the Narkomnats to pardon legislatively S.B. Boyanov, N.O. Ochirov, and other people who had been in opposition to the Soviet authorities but now “shared the Soviet power platform,” and helped the Kalmyk intelligentsia convene an all-Kalmyk congress.

The military situation in the southern part of Russia aggravated abruptly in the spring of 1919: Denikin’s troops occupied a greater part of

the Kalmyk steppe. The All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets was put off. It is necessary to mention that the Kalmyk steppe became an arena of large-scale military operations in 1919. The opposing parties regarded its population as a resource for their military units.

The appeal entitled *To Kalmyk Brothers* issued by the Sovnarkom and signed by V.I. Lenin was published on July 22, 1919. It affected Kalmyks' moods and helped mobilize them to fight Denikin's White Army. Having outlined the major ways for solving the problem related to Kalmyk national autonomy, the Soviet government guaranteed free and equal development of Kalmykia. In fact, it was a policy document describing ways for the implementation of the Soviet national policy in Kalmykia. The Soviet government promised to render assistance in preparing and holding the All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets and charged a special commission formed by an order of the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR of July 10, 1919 and comprising A. Chapchayev, A. Amur-Sanan, U. Lavgayev, A. Meshcheryakov, G. Mankirov, E. Sarangov, and K. Gertsenberg with the task. K. Gertsenberg was sent to Kalmykia in January 1919 as a plenipotentiary of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Narkomnats, and was not only an auditor but also the political leader of the Soviet authorities in Kalmykia.

As the Civil War was going on at the time, the appeal was heavily propagandist in its essence. The concluding part of the appeal read: "Dear Kalmyk brothers! To convene an All-Kalmyk Congress, we must set a substantial part of your territory free from the White Guard gangs. The government of workers and peasants along with the Red Army are going to liberate your land. However to do so as soon as possible and with as little bloodshed as possible, the entire Kalmyk people as one man must rebel against the tsarist generals and against the White Guard and help the Red Army crash down Denikin."¹⁶

In addition to this political document, the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR issued orders entitled *On New Land Management by the Kalmyk People* (July 24) and *On Protection and Recovery of Cattle Breeding Farming in Kalmykia* (October 15) the same year. The documents created a common program for the resolution of national, territorial, and agrarian problems.¹⁷ Under the order entitled *On New Land Management*, the territory of the Kalmyk steppe was declared "free from the oppression of the rich and belonging to working Kalmyk people forever." The Soviet government recognized the integrity and inalienability of the Kalmyk territory and prohibited any spontaneous migration until detailed land regulations were elaborated.

The decree *On Protection and Recovery of Cattle Breeding Farming in Kalmykia* issued by the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR stipulated the capitation cattle norm of five head (bovine cattle). Cattle owned by Kalmyks within the norm in question was not to be confiscated or put into requisition for the Red Army needs. After the Civil War, the capitation cattle norm were doubled as compared to those stipulated by the First Congress of Land Departments at the Kalmyk steppe executive committees in October 1918. The new norms made up eight head of bovine animals and ten head of small cattle for specialized cattle-breeding farms, and four head of bovine animals and five head of small cattle for combined (crop farming and cattle breeding) farms.

For the practical resolution of problems of nation and state building, it was necessary to regulate the temporary legal status of the Kalmyk central authorities. Since the political, national, and state development of the Kalmyk steppe did not comply with its legal status as an *uyezd*, the Soviet government took actions to extend the rights of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee and enabled it to solve local problems independently. According to the decrees issued by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in January and February 1920, the Kalmyk Executive Committee acquired the rights of a central authority. Thereafter the management of all affairs in the Kalmyk steppe was within the exclusive competence of the Kalmyk Executive Committee.¹⁸

Military operations were over in the Kalmyk steppe by March 1920. The Soviet power was restored but the economy was destroyed. Continuous military operations, ongoing requisitions, robberies, and seizure of property and cattle either by the “Red” or “White” were a heavy burden on the population. Numerous mobilizations imposed by both opposing armies cut down the number of able-bodied male population significantly and deprived thousands of farms of their workers.

In early 1914, before World War I, the Kalmyk steppe population made up 148,025 persons as mentioned above; the population of the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* was 8,512 persons. By the end of 1920, the total of the Kalmyk population in the territory of the Kalmyk steppe (109,745) and Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* (7445) made up 117,190 persons.¹⁹ Thus, during World War I, the Revolution of 1917, and the Civil War, the total Kalmyk population decreased in the two *oblasts* (the Kalmyk steppe and the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*) by 39,347 persons, that is, by 25.14%. If we take into account the low natural growth in the Kalmyk population, it is obvious that the actual losses were even greater.

Cattle-breeding as the key economic basis of the Kalmyk people was critically endangered during the period in question. As compared to 1914,

the cattle stock in Kalmykia decreased from 937,802 to 126,101 head, that is, by almost 7.5 times or 86.5%. By the end of 1920, there remained only 4,522 head of horses (6.6%), 3,661 head of camels (17.9%), 48,492 head of bovine animals (29.9%), 69,257 head of sheep and goats (10.1%).²⁰ As compared to 1913, the planted area was reduced by almost 10 or 11 times and made mere 7,575 *dessiatines* (8,257 hectares).

Under the difficult economic conditions, the newly emerged state authorities of Kalmykia focused their attention on cattle breeding first of all. They started fighting cattle robbery and cattle purchases by illicit dealers with resolution, as well as rendered financial and economic assistance to the population. Although the assistance was limited, it produced some positive impact. In 1920, the Astrakhan *Guberniya* Land Department provided Kalmykia with 400 *poods* of rye (6,400 kg), that is, 15–16 packs per each *ulus*; the central authorities delivered 1,187,381 *arsheens* of textiles (843,040 m) and 58,489 packs of Kalmyk tea. At the same time, Kalmykia yielded to the state 1,213,328 kg of meat, that is, nearly 3.5 thousand head of bovine animals (if one head is equal to 350 kg of meat on average). Thus, each Kalmyk resident yielded 10.5 kg of meat on average and got 7.2 m of textiles and 0.5 packs of Kalmyk tea from the state in return.

When providing the population with food, the Soviet power adhered mainly to the class approach and equal distribution principle. Social bodies rendered assistance to the families whose fathers, husbands, and sons were fighting in the Red Army, to disabled veterans of the Civil War, and to militiamen families in the first place. These categories of the population were provided with the following allowance: from 1.2 to 5 kg of flour and 200 g of sugar per person a month.

From 1920, central authorities got more actively involved in the nation and state building in Kalmykia. In the first six months of 1920, the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR provided 60 hay mowers, 40 droppers, 30 horse-drawn threshing mills, 58 horse-drawn rakes, 500 ploughs, 500 harrows, 100 seeders, 200 milk separators, etc. for economic recovery.²¹

Apart from resolving economic, social, and territorial problems, the Kalmyk Executive Committee had to engage in elaborating a form of statehood for the Kalmyk people. The form of national statehood was a very important political condition for achieving a wide range of social objectives in the interests of a specific people or ethnic group and for the development of the federative state.

As for the forms of national and state structure, there were two opinions among Kalmyk Executive Committee leaders: first, to establish a national state entity in the form of an autonomous *oblast*, and second—in

the form of an autonomous republic. However, the majority supported the idea of an autonomous *oblast*. The central authorities of the RSFSR supported this option as well because it went along with the objective historic conditions and actual possibilities and needs for the development of Kalmykia. The issue of the national and state system was examined at the extended plenum of the Kalmyk Executive Committee on May 26, 1920. Its participants had a detailed discussion and concluded that the state entity of the Kalmyk people was to be created in the form of an autonomous *oblast*.

This form of national statehood complied with the actual political and economic situation in Kalmykia during the post-war period when its economy and productive forces were largely destroyed.

The history of Soviet Kalmykia shows that its statehood, in the form of an autonomous *oblast*, in that period was optimal for Kalmykia to overcome the social, economic, political, and cultural underdevelopment as well as to build mutual relations, provide assistance and cooperation between the Kalmyk people and other peoples within the RSFSR, but also to form, consolidate, and develop the Kalmyk people and to acquire experience of independent state administration within a federation.

In February–May 1920, congresses of *aimak* citizens were held all over Kalmykia. *Aimak* soviets were reelected and congresses of *ulus* soviets were held where delegates for the forthcoming All-Kalmyk Congress of the Soviets of Working Kalmyk People were elected. Moreover, in violation of the electoral law principles, the Kalmyk Executive Committee included troop units, associations, Communist party nuclei, and state enterprises as electoral units for electing delegates to the All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets.

The First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets of Working Kalmyk People held in the settlement of Chilgir, Ikitsokhurovsky *ulus*, on July 2–9, 1920 summed up the achievements of the national and state building in Kalmykia in the period of 1918–1920. As many as 349 delegates (290 with the right of the casting vote and 59 delegates with the consultative vote among them), as well as preliminaries from the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR, the Defense Soviet, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik party (I.P. Babkin), the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom of the RSFSR (K.R. Gertsenberg), the Astrakhan *Guberniya* Executive Committee (Kh.A. Aitov), and the Astrakhan State University (Rector S.V. Parashchuk and Professor A.M. Skrynnikov) participated in the congress. As many as 43 delegates were members of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and 12 delegates were party candidates.²² Congress delegates represented all of the Kalmyk *uluses* within the Astrakhan and

Stavropol *guberniyas* along with the Kalmyks residing in the Don and Terek region, Kirgizia, the Urals, and the Orenburg *guberniya*.

Bolsheviks took full control over the Congress. Before proceeding to the agenda, a joint session of the party faction of the Congress, the Kalmyk Executive Committee members, and *ulus* executive committees chairmen was held. The agenda and working apparatus of the All-Kalmyk Congress were discussed. The draft entitled *Declaration of the Kalmyk Working People* was approved at the session. The party faction suggested the following agenda: 1) Kalmyks and the Russian Revolution; 2) current situation; 3) nationality question; 4) *Declaration of the Rights of the Kalmyk Working People*; 5) reports concerning the work of the Kalmyk Executive Committee and its departments (reports on the local situation); 6) assuming a settled way of life; 7) location of the *oblast* executive committee; 8) daily proceedings; 9) elections of the *oblast* executive committee; 10) adoption of an appeal to Oriental peoples.²³

The First All-Kalmyk Congress of the Soviets of the Working Kalmyk People was a constitutional one. It proclaimed the Kalmyk people statehood in the form of an autonomous *oblast* as a part of the RSFSR (as a federation member). The Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* was not a part of any administrative or territorial entity. The legal status of the proclaimed Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* was legislated by the *Declaration of Rights of the Kalmyk Working People*, which was adopted in compliance with the 1918 Constitution of the RSFSR and was regarded as a constitutional act.

The historical significance of the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets of the Working Kalmyk People lied in the fact that it proclaimed the statehood of the Kalmyk people, even if in the form of autonomy. A century and a half later, the people finally found its national statehood as a member of forming a Soviet-type Russian unitary state, although with a number of merely formal attributes.

As a result, Kalmyk people living in different *guberniyas* and *oblasts* (the Astrakhan and Stavropol *guberniyas*, the Tver *oblast*, and other *oblasts*) acquired their national integrity and their own territory. The Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* became a self-governing administrative and territorial member of the RSFSR and was granted all the rights that a member of this type was entitled to. The Declaration outlined the government system with the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets and Kalmyk Central Executive Committee (the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee after January 1926) as the supreme authorities.

Based on the constitutional principles for the formation of government authorities in the RSFSR, the Declaration recognized and legislated the

main features of the unitary state regarding relations between the Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* and central authorities: “the Congress of the *oblast* soviets and the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* are directly subordinate to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom. Department heads of the Kalmyk autonomous *oblast*’s Central Executive Committee are approved by corresponding soviets of people’s commissars.”²⁴

The Declaration outlined the system and units of autonomous *oblast* authorities (*oblast*, *ulus*, and *aimak* congresses of soviets) and the scope of their competencies. It also provided a detailed description of powers of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee as the supreme authority in Kalmykia in-between the congresses. That is why it supervised not only executive committees but also the soviets. A system of interdepartmental bodies of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee managed the local economic, social, and cultural development.

The All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets formed the following departments in the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee: 1) administrative; 2) military; 3) judicial; 4) labor; 5) social security; 6) people’s education; 7) financial; 8) agricultural; 9) food; 10) soviet for people’s economy; 11) workers’ and peasants’ inspectorate; 12) statistical; 13) public health; 14) veterinary. Moreover, they planned to establish a department of the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Fighting Counter-Revolution, Profiteering, and Official Corruption (VChK).

The Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk autonomous *oblast*, elected by the *oblast* congress of soviets, played an important part in the system of government authorities in the Kalmyk *oblast*. It was more than a mere executive and regulatory agency. It was also a plenipotentiary body endowed with all the rights that congresses had, except for the right to solve issues within the competence of *oblast* congresses of soviets only. The Kalmyk Central Executive Committee was subordinated to the congress of the *oblast* soviets, the All-Russian Executive Committee and Sovnarkom of the RSFSR.

At its final session held on July 9, the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets elected the Central Executive Committee of the autonomous *oblast* comprising 28 members including three members delegated from Kalmykia to the Narkomnats of the RSFSR and ten candidate members to the Central Executive Committee. The candidate members to the Central Executive Committee were nominated by *ulus* delegations, the total of 28 persons; each of them was voted for at the congress on an individual basis and by open voting. Communists won 22 seats (58%) out of 38 for mem-

bers and member candidates to the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee, and all of them took key positions in the executive authorities in the *oblast*. The Kalmyk Central Executive Committee comprised only one woman—B.S. Akuginova. The ethnic composition of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee was the following: 31 persons (81.5%) were Kalmyks, 7 (18.5%) were Russians; the congress representing mainly delegates from Kalmyk *uluses* and *aimaks*.²⁵

A permanent body of the Central Executive Committee—Presidium—was established at the first session of the Central Executive Committee, which was held on July 19, 1920. It was not only a higher authority in the *oblast* in between sessions of the Central Executive Committee but also its operative working body. Five people were elected to the Presidium: Chairman of the Central Executive Committee A.Ch. Chapchayev—as the Presidium Chairman, secretary of the Central Executive Committee F.I. Plyunov—as a secretary, and U.L. Lavgayev, E.-A.K. Kekeyev, G.M. Mankirov—as three members. In view of the growth of the membership of the Central Executive Committee in early 1925, the Presidium membership also increased to seven.²⁶

One of the last sessions of the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets adopted an *Appeal of the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets to Oriental Peoples*. The Appeal revealed the essence of the oriental policy pursued by Bolsheviks in the geostrategic interests of the emerging Communist empire. The Soviet East, including Kalmyks as representatives of the Mongol peoples and as Buddhists, was largely regarded as a “channel” to the world revolution. Therefore, it was not accidental that the Appeal read: “from now on, free Russia, Soviet and Socialist Russia, will become the cradle of freedom for all the oppressed in the world. It calls for brothers urging them to liberate all the oppressed and enslaved. Dear Buddhist brothers! Respond to the call and raise the banner of revolutionary struggle. Consolidate the ranks of your powerful army of many millions of the oppressed and enslaved. Go and fight! It is high time for revenge. ... Hurry up to form your own regiments of the Red Army to become the stronghold of your freedom. The first congress of the free Kalmyk people is extending a helping hand to you as brothers do, and is calling upon you to join the sacred struggle, the decisive and final struggle for freedom for all working people.”²⁷

In this connection, the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* by Bolsheviks was considered to be not only a decision related to the national and public life of the Russian peoples but also a part of its eastern policy. That is why the Political Bureau of the Russian Communist Party's

(of Bolsheviks) Central Committee issued a resolution entitled *On the Goals of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) in the territories of Oriental Peoples* after discussing reports delivered by the delegation of the RSFSR at the First Congress of Eastern Peoples on October 14, 1920. The Political Bureau charged the government of the RSFSR with building autonomies “for those eastern peoples that have no autonomous institutions as yet, first of all for Kalmyks, Buryats and Mongols.”²⁸ In compliance with the resolution adopted by the Political Bureau on October 14, 1920, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Soviet of People’s Commissars of the RSFSR approved the resolution passed by the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets about the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* on November 4, 1920.

The administrative and territorial structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* was described in a separate section of the *Declaration of the Rights of the Working Kalmyk People*. According to the Declaration, which had the force of a constitutional law, the administrative and territorial structure of Kalmykia was formed based on the national and territorial principle. In compliance with the Declaration, the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* comprised 10 *uluses* (Erketenevsky, Yandyko-Mochazhnyi, Ikitsokhurovsky, Kharakhusovsky, Khoshoutovsky, Bagatsokhurovsky, Manychsky, Maloderbetovsky, the Kalmyk Bazaar, Bolshederbetovsky, the Kumsky *aimak* of the Terek *Oblast*) and 13 stanitsas in the Don *Oblast*.²⁹

This resolution was not yet a final one that established the administrative structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*. The First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets entrusted the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee with solving the task of defining the boundaries of the *oblast* jointly with the related provincial executive committees and representatives of central authorities, as well as uniting small *uluses* and *aimaks* into larger units.

When adopting the resolution about the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* on November 4, 1920, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Soviet of People’s Commissars of the RSFSR took into consideration the resolution passed by the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets. The All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Soviet of People’s Commissars of the RSFSR charged a special commission, which comprised representatives of the Narkomnats, Narkovnuvel, and Narkomzem with the participation of Kalmyks and members of related provincial executive committees, with defining the boundaries of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*.

Upon the detailed examination of this problem the involved parties (representatives of the aforesaid people’s commissariats), the administrative

commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee finally worked out and adopted a draft resolution on November 19, 1920. The draft resolution defined the boundaries of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*. The draft resolution was then subjected to preliminary consideration at a session of the Soviet of People's Commissars of the RSFSR on November 23, 1920. This document was passed with no essential amendments on November 25, 1920, and the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Soviet of People's Commissars of the RSFSR adopted a resolution about the boundaries of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* at the same time.

This resolution passed by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Soviet of People's Commissars of the RSFSR defined the territory of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* almost in compliance with the *Declaration of Rights of the Working Kalmyk People*, except for the 13 *stanitsas* of the Don *Oblast*, which had no territorial relation to the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*. A few clarifications were made too. The Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* comprised Bagatsokhurovsky, Ikitsokhurovsky, Aleksandrovsky (Khoshoutovsky), Kharakhusovsky, Erketenevsky, Maloderbetovsky (except for the Chervlensky and Northern *aimaks*, which were annexed to the Chernoyarsky *uyezd* of the Tsaritsyn *Guberniya*), Yandyko-Mochazhnyi, Manychsky, the Kalmyk Bazaar *uluses* of the Astrakhan *Guberniya*; the Sadovaya, Obilnaya, Kiseleva, Zavetnaya, Torgovaya, Valuyevka, Remontnaya, Kresty, Kormovaya, Priyutnaya, Elista, Bulgun, Kyuryulta, and Ulanskoye *volosts* of the Chernoyarsky *uyezd* of the Tsaritsyn *Guberniya* located to the south of the Abganerovskaya and Aksaiskaya *volosts*; the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* of the Stavropol *Guberniya* (except for the Yashaltinskaya *volost* and the Knyaz-Mikhailovsky settlement along the Dzhalta middle river); a part of the territory of the Salsky district of the Don *Oblast* connecting the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* with the main territory of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* and located between the boundaries of the Stavropol and Astrakhan *guberniyas* and in parallel with latitude 46–30° south of the Pulkovo Meridian; the Kumsky *aimak* of the Terek *Oblast*.³⁰

Thus, it was for the first time in their history that the Kalmyk people acquired their statehood in the form of a Soviet autonomous *oblast* with a well-defined administrative and territorial structure. Defining exact boundaries between the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* and neighboring *guberniyas* and *oblasts* took a rather long time and was finally completed in the late 1920s–early 1930s.

The territory and boundaries of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* were mainly established in compliance with the household and economic life

conditions, as well as the ethnographic principle and the principle of integrity for the territory of the Kalmyk steppe and the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*. The Chervlenskiy and Northern *aimaks* of the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus* were not added to the *Oblast* since they were deeply wedged in the Chernoyarskiy *uyezd* of the Tsaritsyn *Guberniya*.

Considerable changes were introduced into the administrative and territorial structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* rather soon. The need to modify the administration and cut down administrative expenses, as well as to improve the land utilization, resulted in an increase in the number of *uluses*, *aimaks* and led to the formation of the Remontnenskiy *uyezd* in 1921. Ten *uluses*, 70 *aimaks* and *volosts* were replaced by eight *uluses* including one *uyezd* and 47 *aimaks* and *volosts*. The Ikitsokhurovskiy and Kharakhusovskiy *uluses* were united in the Ikitsokhurovsko-Kharakhusovskiy *ulus* with five *aimaks*. The Privolzhskiy *ulus* consisting of three large *aimaks* was formed in the territory of Bagatsokhurovskiy and Khoshoutovskiy *uluses* and the Kalmyk Bazaar.³¹ Therefore, the administrative and territorial structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* included the Bolshederbetovskiy, Maloderbetovskiy, Privolzhskiy, Manychskiy, Yandyko-Mochazhnyi, Erketenevskiy, Ikitsokhurovsko-Kharakhusovskiy *uluses*, the Remontnenskiy *uyezd*, and the Kumskiy *aimak* until February 1923.

However, this administrative and territorial structure of Kalmykia did not last long. Following an application of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee, a resolution of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of February 14, 1923 defined the administrative and territorial structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* as comprising eight *uluses*, one *uyezd*, 41 *aimaks*, and five *volosts*.³² According to the new administrative and territorial structure, the Privolzhskiy *ulus* was enlarged, and the Bagatsokhurovskiy and Khoshoutovskiy *uluses* and the Kalmyk Bazaar were restored with the previous boundaries. In addition, the Erketenevskiy *ulus* was annexed to the Yandyko-Mochazhnyi one, the word "Kharakhusovskiy" was omitted from the "Ikitsokhurovsko-Kharakhusovskiy" *ulus* name, and the *ulus* was named as "Ikitsokhurovskiy" with its territory remaining within the previous boundaries of united *uluses*. And yet, the same year the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee had to return to the problem of restoration of the Erketenevskiy *ulus* since the reasons that caused its liquidation were not in place any longer. The resolution of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of January 14, 1924 restored the Erketenevskiy *ulus* comprising the Northern, Central, and Southern *aimaks*. Ulan-Khol village became the center of the *ulus*.³³

In February 1924, under an order issued by the All-Russian Executive Committee Presidium the Yashaltinskaya, Esto-Khaginskaya, and Nemet-sko-Khaginskaya *volosts* of the Stavropol *guberniya* were incorporated into the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus*, and the Dzhezhenkinskiy *aimak* was formed in the Manychskiy *ulus*. Thus, in January 1924–May 1925 the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* comprised nine *uluses* (Bagatsokhurovskiy, Khoshoutovskiy, Yandyko-Mochazhnyi, Erketenevskiy, Manychskiy, the Kalmyk Bazaar, Ikitsokhurovskiy, Bolshederbetovskiy, and Maloderbetovskiy), one *uyezd* (Remontnenskiy), 44 *aimaks*, and 6 *volosts*.³⁴

In 1925, substantial changes were made to the political division of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*. Under an order issued by the All-Russian Executive Committee Presidium on May 25, 1925, the Remontnenskii *uyezd* except for the villages of Sadovoye, Umantsevo, Bislyurta, Troitskoye (Bulgun), Elista, Voznesenovka (Kyuryulta), and Priyutnoye was incorporated into the Salskiy district of the North-Caucasian *Kray*.³⁵ No changes in the political division of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* were introduced until the beginning of 1930, except for an increase in the number of *aimaks* and village soviets.

The final demarcation, stabilization of the *ulus* division and expansion of the system of local authorities in the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* in the period of 1920–1929 facilitated the recovery of the Kalmyk economy and rendered the administrative machinery more perceptive to the population's needs. At the same time, the new *ulus* division was not economically grounded.

Immediately after the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*, Bolsheviks from the Kalmyk steppe proceeded with setting up a local party organization. The *uyezd* party conference of Kalmyk Communists was held in Astrakhan on December 12, 1920. Astrakhan bushel maker N.Kh. Zavertyayev was elected as the secretary of the Kalmyk *uyezd* party committee.

The *uyezd* party committee and the Presidium of the Kalmyk Executive Committee organized and held the First Founding Party Conference of the Kalmyk *oblast* on February 18–20, 1921. Forty-eight delegates were elected to represent some 300 Communists from the local party nuclei at this conference. Along with the resolution of organizational problems, the party conference heard reports on the economic development in the country, operation of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee, history of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), and discussed and adopted resolutions about the formation of Kalmyk military units and struggle against banditry, as well as work among women.

The discussions and resolutions adopted by the conference indicated that the party was not only a political organization but also a governmental agency with functions typical of governmental institutions endowed with executive and administrative powers. That was why the party conference paid great attention to economic revival, the development of farming agriculture, and the forthcoming sowing campaign.

On the last day of the session, February 20, the party conference elected 11 members of the *oblast* party committee (A.G. Meshcheryakov, B.S. Akuginova, A.Ch. Chapchayev, A.M. Amur-Sanan, A.G. Maslov, U.L. Lavgayev, Kh.O. Otkhonov, G.M. Mankirov, Kononenko, Sukhov, Filatov) and three member candidates for the *oblast* committee (B.M. Kozhiyev, E.A. Kekeyev, V.V. Tolkunov). Nine people (63%) out of the 14 members and candidate members of the *oblast* party committee were also members of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee elected by the First All-Kalmyk Congress of Soviets. Thus, Kalmyk party organs began coalescing with governmental authorities from the very moment of their formation.

The *oblast* committee also elected its Presidium and supervisory commission. The Presidium comprised six people (with A. Chapchayev as the executive secretary), all of them members of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee. The Conference elected A.Ch. Chapchayev and Ye. Solodukhin delegates from the Kalmyk party organization to the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), endowing them with the right of the casting vote.³⁶

Despite a small number of party members, the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee was made equal in its status to the *oblast* one, directly subordinate to the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) based on the democratic centralism principles, and was included into the party administration structure. In order to ensure strict control over the political situation in the *oblast* and over the building of the new Socialist system, the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) "recommended" in early 1922 that I.R. Marbush-Stepanov, who had been a representative of the Narkomnats of the RSFSR in Kalmykia for a year, be appointed the secretary of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee. He was immediately "elected" to the Presidium of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee and appointed the head of the Military Council for Fighting the *Kulak* Counterrevolution. In 1921, Kalmykia along with some other *oblasts* showed symptoms of a social, political, and economic crisis caused primarily by the military communism policy and surplus appropriation system. The frustration among farmers resulted in

organized armed uprisings, and the remainders of the defeated armed groups from neighboring *guberniyas* and *oblasts* joined them.

Under conditions of an imminent danger, the Bolsheviks managed to mobilize the underprivileged, as well as all available resources to fight against the counterrevolution, and severely punished those who demanded free disposition of the products they made.

In this complicated political and economic situation, the Communist Party conducted a tactical maneuver to reinforce Soviet power and implement its Plan for building socialist society. Under resolutions adopted by the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), the country made a transition from the military Communism policy to the New Economic Policy, which meant the replacement of the surplus appropriation system with an agricultural tax in kind. According to the concept of “non-capitalist development” proposed by Marx and Lenin, the Tenth Congress of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) adopted a governmental and party program for implementing a national policy aimed at making an accelerated leap “from feudalism to socialism.”

By using all available ideological instruments and with all power in their hands, the party and Soviet authorities of Kalmykia began promoting the New Economic Policy on a large scale and launched an active campaign to restore the *oblast* economy. Party conferences and *oblast* congresses of Soviets, which were held in 1921–1922, discussed and planned measures for economic restoration of the *oblast*, first of all of its major economic branch, cattle-breeding. Another goal was to expand the cultivated areas, to found cooperative farms, to develop all types of state and cooperative trade, and to restore and develop the fishing industry. When setting these goals, the party and Soviet bodies acknowledged that the economic forces of the *oblast* were undermined to a great degree, and it would be impossible to restore its economy without any government aid.³⁷

The tight situation formed in the economy of the *oblast* as a result of the Civil War and military Communism policy was further aggravated by the droughts of 1921–1922. In 1922, more than 90% of the population in Kalmykia did not have enough food to eat, and Kalmykia was named a needy *oblast*. The Soviet government established a special agency for fighting famine in the country (Tsentrpomgol) and provided Kalmykia with essential goods from its scarce resources: flour, seeds, tea, grains, kerosene, matches, etc. Some *guberniyas* and *oblasts* also extended their helping hand to Kalmykia. Over 56,000 *poods* of bread, three cars of

grains, about 6,000 *poods* of potatoes, vegetables, and other products were supplied from the Orel and Orenburg *guberniyas*, as well as from Nalchik and Baku in December 1921 alone.³⁸ For the purposes of accumulation of money, the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR allowed Kalmykia to assign 90% of all locally collected taxes to the local budget. In 1921, the government also provided the *oblast* with 62,150 *poods* of seed grain (wheat, barley, millet), 11,372 items of different agricultural machinery—ploughs, seeders, hay mowers, harrows, sickles, and so on as a long-term loan. An important measure approved by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom of the RSFSR was a temporary exemption of Kalmyks from military service.

The Voronezh and Kursk *oblasts*, the Buryat–Mongol and Georgian Republics, as well as the Mongol People's Republic also rendered assistance by providing Kalmyks with 57 cars of bread products and about 300 rubles in gold. However, the Kalmyk authorities realized that the famine problem could not be fully resolved in this way. They had to develop their own economy. Along with the revival of cattle breeding and the development of crop farming, they began taking measures to equip the fishing industry, which was one of the major sources for the revenue item of the budget and provided the population with food products.

Although it introduced the New Economic Policy and allowed peasants to dispose of their product surplus on their own, the state acquired control over the trade in the *oblast* via consumer cooperative societies and state chain of enterprises, which began forcing out private farmers very soon. When the New Economic Policy was introduced in March 1921, it was consumer cooperative societies that were in charge of commercial operations in the *oblast*. The Kalmyk *Oblast* Union of Consumer Societies was formed in October 1921 to unite 12 consumer societies comprising 72,000 persons. Nevertheless, the private sector covered up to 88% of retail trade in 1923 as yet.

The *oblast* party committee strictly instructed local party organizations to involve people in consumer cooperative societies: each party member from a village had to become a member of a consumer cooperative society and attract farm laborers, poor people, and peasants of average income to become members too. That was the reason why the peasants of the *oblast* sold 13,057 *poods* of wool, 5,638 *poods* of raw stock, 7,169 sheepskins, 942 head of cattle, and 27,779 *poods* of fish to the state via cooperative societies and not on the free market as early as in 1922.³⁹ Peasants had to acquire agricultural machines, textiles, etc. via consumer cooperative societies at prices set by the state. Thus, the introduction of consumer coop-

erative trade prevented peasants from developing their businesses and made them accustomed to the socialist economy system—planned distribution and dependency.

Peasant Mutual Aid Committees (PMACs) were established all over Kalmykia in November 1921 for the purposes of laying foundations for the socialist building in the countryside and monitoring this process. Their activities were based on the class approach (yet, this principle did not prevent the state from collectivizing the property of the members and *dekulakizing* them in the future). The committees assisted poor peasants through expanding their crop areas, sowing fields with seeds, and harvesting the crop. They also provided them with different loans on favorable terms and defended their legal interests. The state policy aimed at permitting limited land lease and attracting hired labor on a contractual basis and under supervision by trade unions served the same objective during the period of the New Economic Policy. The state allowed a limited economic growth of the households belonging to poor peasants and peasants with average means, but resolutely suppressed the development of large private farms in the countryside. That is why by 1925 the number of farms possessing up to 2 cattle head amounted to 18%; 2–20 head—69%; 20–50 head—6%; 50 and over—2%; peasants having no cattle made up 5%. Thus, 87% of all farms had 1–20 head of cattle, and after becoming established, they would make the economic foundation for socialist building in the countryside. The figures given above also prove that a very important socialist goal was pursued, namely, the provision of equal living conditions for the entire population.

The *oblast* party and Soviet bodies were aware that it would be impossible to revive the economy without serious state support. They requested the central authorities to promote fishery by providing Kalmyks with the fishery resources and territories that used to belong to them, as well as to allocate funds for the development of crop farming and cattle breeding. In 1923, the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR provided Kalmykia with a credit facility of 2,486,473 rubles for enhancing its economy, 41,608 rubles for purchasing agricultural machinery, and 997,072 rubles for buying pedigree cattle, as well as a loan of seed of 55,927 *poods*. In addition, the *oblast* was exempted from the obligation to repay the loan of 131,000 *poods* of grain, which was received in 1920–1921, as well as from food duties in 1922 and 1923.⁴⁰

Positive trends appeared in the development of economy in the *oblast* due to considerable aid from the state and efficient utilization of internal resources in 1923. The cattle stock grew up to 156,940 in 1923, from only

126,101 head in 1920. Yet, the cattle stock in 1923 was still only 12.2% of the total productive livestock in Kalmykia in 1916 (1,289,800 head) while in Russia the productive livestock in 1923 made up 76.3% of the stock of 1916 (91,300 head).⁴¹ The sowing areas in Kalmykia were 18,938 *dessiatines* in 1923, which was 2.3 times as much as in 1920. However, the prewar level of sowing areas was not restored. In 1923, the areas (in *dessiatines*) were 4–4.5 times as little as in 1913.

The transition of Kalmyks to the settled way of life was happening in the same period. This problem was set and solved as a part of the socialist building process. Although we cannot deny the significance of all the work done to modify land management and land utilization as well as to construct of water reservoirs and land reclamation facilities, and settle the Kalmyk people, we should also mention considerable side effects of this process, namely a considerable reduction in the cattle stock and a drop in people's standard of living. This led to a change of the forms of economy.

In addition, the dry years (1921, 1922, and 1924) showed that the dynamic nature of the nomad economy was lost as a result of a considerable reduction of the pasture grounds. Thus, the report of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee presented to the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee in May 1923 correctly mentioned that "after the famine of 1922, Kalmyks have proceeded to farming with zeal, they are carrying out collectivization, and many of them are becoming settled."⁴² While in 1923 some 470 nomad families (1,875 persons) settled down, 13,726 families or nearly one half of the nomad Kalmyks did so in November 1925–April 1926. The total number of families that switched to the settled way of life made up 17,365 (55.8%) by the early 1926. To be sure, the order entitled *On Land Management among Nomad and Semi-Nomad Kalmyks and Those in the Process of Settling* issued by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom of the RSFSR on March 23, 1925 enhanced the process of Kalmyk transition to the settled way of life. According to the document, the *oblast* received 375,000 rubles in the 1925–1926 fiscal year.⁴³

It is well known that the plan for building socialism included the cooperation of peasants in sales and supplying, first of all, and in the production sphere, too. At first the Kalmyk cooperation was integral by its nature, that is, consumer, agricultural, handicraft, commercial, etc. types of cooperation were concentrated in a single cooperative society. By the end of 1926, there were 42 cooperative societies there including 22 consumer, 19 credit-agricultural, and one fishery association, which comprised 10,795 members, or 30.4% of all peasants in the *oblast*. While the share of

consumer cooperative societies in the *oblast* sales made 40%, that of the state sector was only 3% of the market.⁴⁴ Developing all types of cooperation, the party and Soviet authorities were trying not only to improve the supply of the population, but also to ensure the predomination of the state and cooperative trade and to make peasants gradually accustomed to collective farming.

Under complicated conditions, when some elements of capitalist economy had to be tolerated in the course of socialist building due to the weakness of the economic basis, the Kalmyk party organs were purposefully enhancing their guiding role in all spheres of life consolidating all political actors in the *oblast* in order to gain their support and assistance. First of all, they turned their attention to founding public organizations similar in their class composition and acting as tools in the class struggle, first of all trade unions and Komsomol (Young Communist League).

The trade unions, which took their final organizational shape in September 1921 with the Kalmyk *Oblast* Soviet of trade unions on the top of their hierarchy, played one of the leading roles in regional politics. By the beginning of 1922, there were three industrial trade unions in the *oblast* (land and forest workers and employees, fish industry workers, and education and healthcare trade unions) with a membership of 2,568 persons. By the end of 1925, there were as many as seven industrial trade unions in the *oblast* comprising 5,640 members. From the very beginning of their existence, the trade unions not only defended the interests of workers and employees, but also enhanced labor discipline, performance and public production efficiency, and disseminated Bolsheviks' ideas among the working masses.

The *oblast* party organization paid special attention to involving the youth in socialist building and to the education of young people. Young people of the working class started joining Komsomol, an association that united the Kalmyk youth that shared the same ideology. At the initial stage of its formation, the *oblast* Komsomol organization comprised only 240 members. However, its membership grew at a high rate during the following years. By the end of 1925, the *oblast* Young Communist League comprised 2,861 members.⁴⁵ The *oblast* party organization considered the youth an active force in socialist building and took much care about its education as a part of the revolutionary transformation and development of Kalmyk society.

In spite of great investments, the Kalmyk economic revival was slow except for fishery, which specialized in raw fish production because of the absence of any processing facilities. Despite the fact that only 35% of the

fishing industry was restored, it did provide employment for a part of the population. In 1926, as many as 1,632 persons were involved in fishing (Kalmyks making 57.6% of them).⁴⁶

The cattle stock almost doubled as compared to 1920 to make up 241,056 head in 1925. However, it still made only 18.7% of 1916 cattle stock. The sown area increased by 4.5 times to make up 38,073 *dessiatines* (41,500 hectares) for the same period, which amounted to one third of the pre-war figure. At the same time, the crop yield was very low, only 4.6 centners.

While the process of economic revival was largely completed in the rest of the country, the agricultural production having reached 87% of the pre-war level, only 35% of the Kalmyk economy was restored because of the reasons mentioned above.

The weakness of the economic basis prevented the authorities from allocating sufficient funds for improving the social infrastructure in the *oblast*. At the same time and despite the scarcity of resources, the positive trends in the field of culture and medical care became evident. In the 1925–1926 school year, the number of schools increased to 92 from 21 in the 1920–1921 academic year, the number of teachers reaching 477. In 1925–1926, education was provided to about 1,500 persons at 79 centers for illiteracy liquidation. The *khotons* and villages in the *oblast* opened 12 libraries and clubs along with 41 village reading rooms, which first of all propagated the Communist ideology among the population.⁴⁷

Some progress was achieved in the field of medical care during the same period. While only four doctors and 45 paramedics worked in Kalmykia in 1920, by 1926 there were 29 medical centers staffed with 30 physicians, 82 paramedics and 10 pharmacists. The total number of hospital beds was 387. However, if we take into consideration the total number of the population of the *oblast* (141,594 people in 1926) and the number of towns and villages (627 villages, settlements, hamlets, *khotons*, *ulus* camps, fishery sites, *khuruls* and tracts),⁴⁸ the average social infrastructure development indices were very low and incommensurable with those in the RSFSR.

The *oblast* Communist party organs also prioritized the establishment and development of mass media. While before 1926 only one newspaper—*Ulan Khalmg* (*Red Kalmyk*)—was published in the Kalmyk *oblast*, in 1926 there appeared the newspapers *Krasnaya Step* (*Red Steppe*) with a supplement published in the Kalmyk language and *Kalmytskiye Izvestiya* (*Kalmyk News*), as well as the magazines *Oiratskiye Izvestiya* (*Oirat News*), *Bulletin of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) Oblast*

Committee, Za Rabotu (At Work), and Kalmytskaya Step (Kalmyk Steppe). Party organs presented these periodicals as the voice of the Kalmyk people and a significant step forward in their cultural development. Taking into consideration the fact that newspapers were not published in Kalmykia before at all and their positive effect on the Kalmyk people, we still should mention that these media were ideological and propagandist tools of the Communist party.

National cadres and intelligentsia were raised on the basis of the new socialist ideology from the very early Soviet period. The first educational institutions in the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*, the pedagogic and agricultural technical schools, along with the Communist party and Soviet school, played an important part in the training.

However, the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) was worried by the slow rates of Kalmykia socialization and audited the activities of its party and Soviet bodies in 1925. The enactment adopted by the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) instructed the *oblast* Communist party committee to enhance the ideological level of propagandist activities, increase the party membership in the *oblast* involving farm laborers, poor peasants and peasants with average means, and intensify the influence on the local Soviets. Despite its fast growth (the number of the party members increased from 570 in 1924 to 1,759 by the end of 1924, i.e., by 3.1 times, while the average increase in the country was 1.7 times⁴⁹), the *oblast* party membership was still small and the education level among the members rather low (workers and peasants made up 78% of all members, most of them illiterate).

As they were trying to gain control over the process of formation of the state authorities, the Communist party organizations assumed an active role in the course the 1925 re-election campaign. The party's Central Committee decided to make the party organizations representative bodies of the working class, labor peasantry, Communists, and Komsomol members, rather than of the entire population. Thus, it was accidental that representatives from the party and Komsomol organizations were included in electoral commissions chaired by high-ranking party officials. In this way the party was assuming control over the electoral commissions. The Kalmyk Central Executive Committee approved of the membership of the Central Electoral Commission of Kalmykia chaired by B. Ochirov, vice-chairman of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee and a member of the *oblast* party committee, upon the recommendation of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee on July 23, 1925.

Soviet historiography is right to speculate in this respect that both central and local party bodies were actively engaged in the preparation and conducting the elections to the soviets. The Kalmyk *oblast* party committee reviewed the issues related to the Soviet election campaign at its plenum and special meeting in August 1925.

Ulus party committees undertook similar measures. Pre-election meetings were held in villages and *aimaks*, with Communists, Komsomol members, farm laborers, and poor people playing a key part.

During the re-election campaign of 1925 close attention was paid not only to the formation of local governments but also to the social composition of voters, the class approach being the key criterion for participation. As a result, a part of the population (up to 2%) was deprived of either actual suffrage or eligibility rights. As many as 1,174 people or 1.4% of the electorate (82,978 persons) lost their right to vote in Kalmykia in 1925. Since 1924, the number of persons deprived of their right to vote decreased by 690 people in 1925.

At the same time, some measures were undertaken that in essence enhanced the “over-organized” democratic principles in forming representative bodies (enhancing the electoral turnout, participation of women and young people, regulating the participation based on age, class, party membership and nationality, etc.). The measures taken made it possible to increase the turnout during the election campaign of 1925. While only 26.5% of voters took part in the elections for local soviets in 1924, the figure amounted to 32.6% in 1925. The share of women that participated in the elections increased as well: from 10% to 18.2%.

Owing to the zealous work of the party organs, representatives of farm laborers and poor peasantry clearly prevailed in the *oblast*’s soviets (302 members (79.2%) out of 381 belonged to these categories in the countryside soviets, 58 members (64.9%) out of 104—in *aimak* executive committees, 44 members (27.1%) out of 162—in *ulus* executive committees, or 104 people (63.5% including workers). The involvement of party and Komsomol members in the executive bodies in local soviets increased substantially: 53 (13.9%) in the village soviets, 54 (52%) in the *aimak* soviets and 103 (63.5%) in the *ulus* soviets. The membership like this ensured that the influence of the party organs on local soviets was significant. The class-based approach to the formation of executive bodies in the local soviets had a negative impact in terms of the education level of the members. As many as 230 (60.3%) semiliterate and illiterate persons were elected to village soviets (33 or 31.7%, semiliterate and illiterate members in the *aimak* executive committees, and 43, i.e., 26.5%, in the *ulus* executive committees).

The re-election campaign to the Kalmyk soviets was launched in August 1925 and the Fourth *Oblast* Congress of Soviets held on October 17–22 concluded it. The Congress of Soviets examined urgent issues related to the economic and cultural life of the *oblast* and elected a standing body, the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee comprising 35 members, working in between the congresses. The Communist faction of the Congress preliminarily discussed candidates for the central authority and recommended them. The executive secretary of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee I.K. Glukhov introduced the candidates on behalf of the faction. The Congress took a decision to abstain from discussing the nominated candidates and vote instead openly for the entire list of candidates.

As a result, all the candidates were elected unanimously. Since members of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) held a majority in the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee (69.2%), it became a state and party organ governed by the *oblast* party committee.

The lower system of state authorities in the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* underwent transformation in 1928, that is, a common system—village soviets (97)—was introduced instead of *aimak* (48) and village (29) soviets. Simple (re-election) meetings of village soviets replaced the complicated and cumbersome re-election system (*aimak* meetings and congresses of *aimak* soviets) of the past. The 1928 account and re-election campaign was held under the political slogan of “criticism and self-criticism,” and its key objective was to strengthen the positions of the poor, agricultural proletariat and peasants of average means against the positions of *kulaks*.ⁱ The intention was to form people’s authorities in a democratic way but the re-elections were looked upon and held as political and class-related events.

As many as 41,502 voters (54.6%) took part in meetings for the re-election of village soviets in the *oblast* in 1928. The figure for the entire country was somewhat higher—63.5%. Thus, 34,475 persons (45.4%) including 21,187 (60.1%) women and 4,492 (5.6%) of those deprived of the right to vote did not participate in the re-election campaign.⁵⁰

During the re-election campaign of 1928 as many as 2,892 persons including 478 (16.5%) women, 2,297 (79.6%) Kalmyks, 513 (17.6%) Russians, and 67 (2.4%) Germans and Estonians were elected to 97 village and settlement soviets of the *oblast* by open voting for a list. The number of Communists and Komsomol members increased from 15.2% to 19.2% as compared to the previous year, while the share of peasants fell from

ⁱ Translator’s note: *kulaks*—well-to-do peasants.

90.4% down to 72.3%. However, the literacy level of village soviets remained low in the *oblast* (34.3% of illiterate people in 1927 and 36.1% in 1928).

In the 1920s, the Bolshevik party paid close attention to the “rootization” policy in order to strengthen party and Soviet bodies in national *oblasts*. The party considered it as a composite and inseparable part of its nationalities policy. Attaching much importance to this issue, the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) instructed the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee to take control over the matter. In February 1924, the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee formed a Commission for Transition to Local Languages in State Office Administration comprising representatives from people’s commissars for finances, education, and internal affairs, as well as the Central Statistical Administration of the RSFSR chaired by V.A. Avanesov, deputy people’s commissar of the Workers’ and Peasants’ Inspectorate (Rabkrin) of the RSFSR. The commission prepared and provided the All-Russian Central Executive Committee with a plan of measures for introducing the native language into office management in the state authorities of autonomous republics and *oblasts*.⁵¹

On April 14, 1924, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee approved this plan of measures and adopted a resolution entitled *On Measures for Transition to Local Languages in the State Office Administration by State Authorities in National Oblasts and Republics*.⁵² It read in particular: “for the purposes of adjusting the Soviet apparatus in national republics and *oblasts* for the indigenous population and for involving the population in active building of the Soviet society, it is necessary to carry out a gradual transition of the office administration in all state authorities or their individual departments to corresponding local languages.” To this effect, it was suggested that local state employees should be trained or re-trained and documentation should be translated into the local languages. However, the official administration in the language of indigenous people was not to interfere with the work of central authorities of the RSFSR by any means.

In April 1924, the functions of the Commission for Transition to Local Languages in State Office Administration were delegated to the Department of Nationalities at the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee formed the same year following the dissolution of the Narkomnats. From now on, the Department was not only to take into account the needs of the peoples residing in the remote regions of Russia and to render the timely necessary aid to them for raising their economies

and culture, but also to improve and update the state apparatus in autonomous entities.

Because of a lack of qualified clerks and funds, the rootization failed to produce any considerable results in Kalmykia in 1921–1926. Among other things, the failure was caused by oversimplified interpretation of the policy on the part of some officials from central authorities, who tried to exclusively appoint representatives of indigenous people's heads of all local state bodies. Some officials' understanding of the policy was that a balanced representation of *oblast* peoples in the state, party, and economic enterprises should be secured, including even keepers, coal-heavers, or cleaners.

The attempt to pursue the rootization policy produced a rather unexpected side effect. It enhanced nationalism at the local level and triggered a chauvinist response.

However, the rootization policy brought about some positive results too, especially taking into account the low literacy level among the able-bodied Kalmyk population (only 9.3% by 1925). What is meant here are the results of the training and advanced training of Soviet state officials. The *oblast* Soviet and Party School started operating in the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic in 1921. By 1925 it trained 232 people, almost 70% of Kalmyks among them, for working in the party and Soviet organizations. However, the *oblast* administrative apparatus experienced an acute shortage of qualified personnel of indigenous origin. *Table 4.1* proves it (as of 1925).

At the same time, advanced training of officials from the lower Soviet authorities was launched. The 300-hour training program was mainly focused on political education.

The implementation of the state apparatus rootization policy was gradually reduced to training indigenous personnel, fighting illiteracy among the population, and teaching the Kalmyk language at schools. The transferring of the state administration to the native language, however, proved very complicated and difficult (weak financial basis, lack of an established norm for the written Kalmyk language, hindrances in correspondence, particularly with central authorities, the increase of the *oblast* administrative staff by almost 10%, etc.). An experiment conducted in 1927 to introduce the state office administration in the Kalmyk language in all enterprises of the Khoshoutovsky *ulus* and in some *aimaks* of another three *uluses* initiated by the *oblast* commission for rootization of enterprises failed.

Table 4.1. Kalmyk membership in the administrative apparatus

Institution	Number of officials including:	
	Kalmyks	Russians, etc.
Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast	3	23
Presidium of Oblast Soviet Trade Unions	4	3
Public Prosecutor's Office	3	25
Oblast Association of Cooperative Societies	17	62
Oblast Court	14	43
Oblast Department for Public Education	2	6
Oblast Planning Department	6	9
Oblast Financial Department	7	74
Labor Department	3	2
Oblast Department for Social Service	1	3
Oblast Administration for Land Management	10	70
Oblast Statistics Bureau	-	11
Oblast Department of the Russian Communist Party	3	10
Administrative Department	13	28
Oblast Military Registration and Enlistment Commission	1	20
<i>Total</i>	87 (18.3%)	349 (81.7%)

By the late 1920s and early 1930s, the rootization policy in Kalmykia (as well as in the entire country) was gradually reduced to nothing without any directives from the center. To summarize it all, we can say that the true objective of the rootization, according to Soviet public official G.K. Ordzhonikidze, was to establish an administrative apparatus that would be controlled and guided by the party and would implement "its resolutions without any circumlocution or delays, without any distortion of their class nature."⁵³ The goals of the Bolshevik party were already achieved by that time—the common party and state administrative apparatus had been formed.

While, according to the party's reports, the pre-war economy level had already been restored in the country on the whole by the beginning of 1926, a similar process in Kalmykia (despite the aid provided by the state on a permanent basis) lagged until the late 1920s. In 1928, the livestock of all cattle types in the *oblast* reached 1,238,754 head including productive livestock: 1,209,710 head, horses: 23,692 (32.9% of the 1913 level) and cam-

els: 5,352 (25.5% of the 1913 level). In 1928, the productive cattle stock in the *oblast* made up 87.3% of the 1916 figure. During the same period the number of productive cattle increased by 28.5% in the whole country.⁵⁴

In 1929, Kalmyk peasants sowed 73,749 hectares of cereal and industrial crops, which was 102.4% of the sowed area in 1917. As compared to 1923, the planted area in the *oblast* increased by 8.9 times. The share of the *oblast's* farms involved in crop farming was 17%, cattle breeding—75%, while the remaining 8% was taken by fishery.

The growth in capital investments made it possible for the fishing industry to boost. The *oblast's* fishing fleet (both state and cooperative) almost doubled (from 1,165 vessels in 1925 to 2,306 in 1929). In 1928, state and cooperative enterprises yielded and processed three times as much fish as in 1925. At the same time, the pre-war size of the fishing industry had not been achieved yet (making only 90% of the latter).⁵⁵

During the hard times in question, much attention was paid to the development of the *oblast's* social infrastructure, including the expansion of the system of healthcare institutions. By 1929, the number of healthcare institutions almost tripled (as compared to 1926) to make up 82 institutions, including 14 hospitals, 36 paramedic posts, 19 health localities, 3 specialized dispensaries, and 10 therapeutic enterprises for mothers with children. The number of medical workers increased substantially: doctors—from 30 to 63, paramedics—from 82 to 113. When the data are analyzed by the growth rate, they seem to be impressive. Yet in fact, the coverage of the population by medical care was insignificant (one bed per 425 people). The population of the *oblast* increased from 141,594 in 1926 to 169,730 people in 1929, including Kalmyks—from 107,026 to 118,614 people, that is, by 10.8%. It is necessary to note that preventive and therapeutic care was closely related to ideological and propagandist activities—delivering lectures on the Soviet power, home culture, sanitary, equality of women, and advantages of collective economy management. Preventive and therapeutic care was conducted in the form of a mass campaign with its plans, tasks, posters, slogans, and reports delivered to all levels of state apparatus, and with more attention paid to the number of the population covered by preventive and therapeutic care, than to the results of such activities.

The goal of the illiteracy liquidation campaign among the *oblast's* adult population was inferior to the “adaptation to socialism” and was clearly stipulated in the decree entitled *On Illiteracy Liquidation among the Population of the RSFSR* issued by the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR on December 26, 1919. It said that all illiterate people aged 8–50 must learn

how to read and write in their native or Russian language at their will “for all the population of the republic to be able to take a conscious part in the country’s political life.” To implement the objective, the People’s Commissariat for Education of the RSFSR formed a department for educating ethnic minorities, and an All-Russian Extraordinary Commission for Illiteracy Liquidation (decree of the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR of July 19, 1920).

Due to economic difficulties and lack of funds, the illiteracy liquidation program was launched in Kalmykia under the auspices of the *oblast* extraordinary commission for illiteracy liquidation in 1922–1923. So-called “illiteracy liquidation posts” were usually organized in *kibitkas* or *dugouts*. As many as 56 illiteracy liquidation posts of this type were organized in 1923 and 1924, some 360 persons acquiring elementary reading and writing skills there. In 1927 and 1928, there were 90 illiteracy liquidation posts, where nine thousand persons acquired literacy skills. The total of some 15 thousand persons received training in the period in question. The illiteracy liquidation program was implemented primarily as a political campaign that pursued ideological objectives, namely the formation of the socialist way of life and a corresponding world-view. To be sure, the illiteracy liquidation policy pursued by the new authorities attracted the masses of common that had been illiterate.

The objective of the Soviet power was not only to overcome illiteracy and implement socialism ideas but also to raise well-educated builders of the new society, as well as to provide workers of the country with access to knowledge. The state education system that was being formed in Kalmykia as a part of the all-Soviet state education system was in charge of implementing this objective since 1920. There were 93 schools, mainly elementary ones, in the *oblast* in the 1920–1921 academic year. As many as 5,950 students (19.5% of school age children) attended the schools. There were 148 teachers, most of them graduates from short-term pedagogic courses or two-year courses in Astrakhan.

Owing to substantial financial support from the center, systematic training of the teaching staff and supplying of methodological literature, the number of the *oblast*’s school system grew to 187 attended by 40% of children (10,485 students) in 1929. As many as 239 teachers worked in the schools in the *oblast* in the 1929–1930 academic year. The Kalmyk Pedagogical Technical School (founded in 1923) and pedagogical higher institutions of the country trained teaching staff. The Kalmyk Chair at the Pedagogy Department of the Saratov State University, which was opened in 1929, laid the foundation for a new phase in the development of educa-

tion. At the same time, many higher education institutions of the country started training highly qualified professionals. While only five Kalmyks were studying in the country's higher education institutions in the 1921–1922 academic year, the figure grew to 179 persons in the 1929–1930 school year.⁵⁶

The political educational institutions in the Kalmyk *oblast* acted as channels for political and ideological propaganda, also serving the goals of mass cultural education. In 1921, there were 17 people's houses, 19 libraries, and six village reading rooms in the *oblast*. Movable “red *kibitkas*” were used on a broad scale for active propaganda and educational work. The *oblast* party organization attached much significance to the political education of the population and to ideological propaganda, through the consistent developing and support of political educational institutions as centers for work with masses in the countryside. In 1929, there were 29 libraries in the *oblast* including one *oblast*, nine *ulus*, and 19 village libraries. *Ulus* centers had 52 village reading rooms equipped with stationary cinema projectors, and there were 16 mobile cinema projectors in villages. The first mobile Kalmyk theater was organized in Elista in the same year.⁵⁷

The general transition to a new administrative and territorial system based on economic zoning principles was aimed at solving the problems pertinent to the building of socialist society, namely the industrialization of the country and collectivization of agriculture.

Moreover, these developments were to promote consolidation and strengthen the role of the local soviets in solving economic, social, and cultural problems.

According to resolutions passed by the 12th Congress of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), the economic zoning of the country was launched as early as 1923. The party and Soviet bodies were solving this problem gradually, examining and accumulating experience in this new and complicated matter. The Congress emphasized that the current administrative and territorial division of the country did not meet the new political and economic needs, and demanded implementing a new administrative division system cautiously and without any haste.⁵⁸

The reorganization of the old *guberniya*, *uyezd*, and *volost*-based system (by the end of 1923, there were 75 *guberniyas*, 19 *oblasts*, 766 *uyezds*, and 13,659 *volosts* in the country) started in 1923–1925. However, the transition to the *kray* and *oblast* system (by that time, there were 11 autonomous republics and 14 autonomous *oblasts* in the RSFSR) of the administrative and territorial system of the country began later and in the form of an experiment.

It is possible to trace three phases in the preparation of economic zoning in the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*.

During the first phase (May 1922–March 1924), a discussion was going on with regard to whether the former administrative division should be preserved and the territory of the *oblast* divided into four large-scale economic zones. According to the resolution adopted by the second session of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee, fourth convocation, held on February 25–March 1, 1924, the territory of the *oblast* was divided into four economic zones (Volga-Kaspiisky, Priyergensky, Tsentralnyi, and Zemledelchesky). At the same time, the session recognized that the actual situation in the *oblast* made it impossible to implement the resolution without delay.⁵⁹

The second phase (August 1925–February 1928) involved the preparation and discussion of the economic zoning options in the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* with taking into account all requirements. Issues related to the revision of the administrative division and implementation of economic zoning were discussed at the *oblast* conference for Soviet construction (August 1925), by the Sixth Congress of Kalmyk Soviets (October 1925), and the second and third sessions of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee (January and May 1926). Following instructions from the central authorities of the country, the party and Soviet organs concluded that it was required to implement a radical modification of the current system of administrative and territorial division in the *oblast* in order to resolve the problems related to the socialist society building.

In 1926, the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee elaborated an economic zoning plan for the *oblast* that stipulated the formation of five large districts and 115 village soviets, instead of nine *uluses* and 81 *aimak* and village soviets. The key objectives of the economic zoning plan were to create economically homogeneous and robust districts with strong economies, finances, and budget, and to ensure that the administrative apparatus was closer to the population and less expensive.

The plan stipulated the establishment of five large *uluses* (Bashatinsky, Tundutovsky, Elistinsky, Shambaisky, and Dolbansky) based on the economic zoning principles. The Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee presented a new project of the *oblast*'s administrative division to the Administrative Commission of the All-Russian Executive Committee. However, the project was not examined until the beginning of 1928 because any changes of administrative and territorial borders were suspended in the country from October 1, 1927. Upon an urgent request of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee, the Administrative Commission of the All-

Russian Executive Committee examined the question of the administrative division of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* on February 7, 1928, and suspended it because the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR was to hear a report by the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee on the economic and cultural situation in the *oblast* in a short time.

The third phase (September 1929–March 1930) was the final one. That was the time when the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* zoning project was completed. Eventually a new project was drafted that stipulated the same number of districts. *Ulus* names were changed and some improvements were introduced. The Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee and its Administrative Commission were taking measures aimed at the preparation and finalization of the zoning process under an order entitled *On Finalizing of the Zoning Reforms* issued by the Russian Central Executive Committee on September 18, 1929 and letter by the Administrative Commission of the Russian Central Executive Committee of November 29, 1929. The latter demanded that the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* Executive Committee and the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee accelerate the elaboration of the zoning project and its presentation.

The meeting of the members and department heads of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee and *ulus* executive committee chairmen considered the agenda item *On Territorial and Administrative Zoning of the Oblast* in Elista on December 26, 1929. The meeting approved of the draft administrative division of the *oblast* based on the principle of division into economically integral and homogeneous administrative and territorial units. The draft stipulated the formation of the following five large economic *uluses*:

1. Zapadnyi: it was formed based on the Bolshederbetovskiy *ulus* (with the administrative center in Bashanta);

2. Sarpinsky: it was formed based on the Maloderbetovskiy *ulus* with the Khoshoutovskiy, Zyungarovskiy, and Satkhalovskiy village soviets of the Ikitsokhurovskiy *ulus* and the Barunovskiy village soviet of the Bagat-sokhurovskiy *ulus* incorporated into it in addition (administrative center: Tsagan-Nur);

3. Stepnoi: based on the Manychskiy *ulus* with the addition of Chilgirskey, Ketchener-Shebenerovskiy, Erketenevskiy, and Achinerovskiy village soviets of the Ikitsokhurovskiy *ulus* and western territories of the Yandyko-Mochazhnyi and Erketenevskiy *uluses* (administrative center: the village of Voznesenovka);

4. Privolzhskiy: it was formed based on the Khoshoutovskiy *ulus* with the addition of the Zyunevskiy, Tsagan-Amanskoy, and Erdniyevskiy village

soviets of the Bagatsokhurovsky *ulus* and the Kalmyk Bazaar settlement soviet (administrative center: the Kalmyk Bazaar);

5. Primorsky: it was formed based on the territories of the Yandyko-Mochazhnyi and Erketenevsky *uluses* that were not a part of the Stepnoi *ulus* (administrative center: the settlement of Tsomok).

The draft was presented for consideration to the Administrative Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee and Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* Executive Committee on January 12, 1930.

The final discussion of the *oblast* economic zoning issues took place at the fourth session of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee on January 27, 1930. The session examined the project of the administrative and territorial division of Kalmykia and adopted some amendments. It decreed to name the Stepnoi district as Tsentralnyi with the administrative center in the village of Ulan instead of the proposed village of Voznesenovka and to transfer the Zyungarovsky village soviet (Ikitsokhurovsky *ulus*) from the Sarpinsky district to the Tsentralnyi district. The session considered it necessary to make the Dede-Lamin Stow the center of the future Sarpinsky district instead of the village of Tsagan-Nur and to make the village of Dzhakuyevka the center of the future Privolzhsky district instead of the settlement of the Kalmyk Bazaar.⁶⁰

On March 30, 1930, the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee examined the final version of the project for the administrative and territorial division of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*, along with the conclusions of the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* Executive Committee, the People's Commissariat for Finances and State Planning Committee of the RSFSR, and made a decision to divide Kalmykia into five districts. The following *uluses* were formed as a result:

1. Zapadnyi—composed of the Bolshederbetovsky *ulus* (with the administrative center in Bashanta);

2. Sarpinsky—composed of the Maloderbetovsky *ulus* with the incorporation of the Khoshoutovsky and Satkhalovsky village soviets of the Ikitsokhurovsky *ulus* (administrative center: Dede-Lamin Stow);

3. Tsentralnyi—composed of the Manychsky *ulus* and Chilgirsky, Erketenevsky, Zyungarovsky, Ketchener-Shebenerovsky, and Achinerovsky village soviets of the Ikitsokhurovsky *ulus*, and the west territories of the Yandyko-Mochazhnyi and Erketenevsky *uluses* that formed a part of state land property (administrative center: the village of Ulan);

4. Privolzhsky—composed of the Khoshoutovsky *ulus* and the Zyunevsky, Tsagan-Amansky, and Erdniyevsky village soviets of the Bagatsokhurovsky settlement soviet (administrative center: the village of Dzhakuyevka);

5. Primorsky—composed of the Yandyko-Mochazhnyi and Erketenevsky *uluses* except for the territories that formed a part of the Tsentralnyi *ulus* (administrative center: the village of Dolban).⁶¹

The administrative and territorial division of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* carried out in 1930 underwent no changes until 1934. However, the number of village soviets increased from 98 in 1930 to 103 by the middle of 1934. In 1930, Elista, that had been the administrative center of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* since 1928, was made a town of republican significance.

In compliance with the ongoing reform aimed at the enlargement of administrative and territorial units, the All-Russian Central Executive Committee formed the following “pilot” *oblasts* within the RSFSR: in November 1923—Ural *oblast*, in January 1925—North-Caucasian *Kray*, in January 1926—Siberian *Kray* and Far Eastern *Kray*, in May 1928—Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* composed of the Saratov, Stalingrad, and Astrakhan *guberniyas* and a part of the Pugachevsky *uyezd* of the Samara *oblast*, as well as the Volga German Republic and the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*.

The All-Russian Central Executive Committee's decrees entitled *On Conditions of Incorporation of Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics in Zoned Kray (Oblast) Units* of June 28, 1928 and *On Mutual Relations between Autonomous Oblasts that Form a Part of Kray (Oblast) Units and Kray (Oblast) Authorities* of October 29, 1928 regulated mutual relations between the *krays* and the autonomous republics within them.

Being an integral part of the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray*, the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* in administrative respect was subordinate to the central authorities of the RSFSR. Since 1924, the Kalmyk affairs were under the supervision of the representative office of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* at the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, which was formed to replace the body with the same name that had operated at the Narkomnats of the RSFSR.⁶² Kalmykia was also represented at the supreme government body of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)—the Central Executive Committee. There was a Kalmyk representative in the Soviet for Nationalities as well.

The above-mentioned decrees stipulated that autonomous republics were to form parts of the *krays* on a voluntary basis and to have legal powers within the scope of their competencies and the right to form and pass their republican budgets. Formally, autonomous *oblasts* were independent of the *kray* bodies. However, the lawmaker restricted their rights related to many aspects of their financial, tax, and personnel policies. In

particular, some 300 workers from different Soviet and cooperative organs of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* were dismissed under a proposal from a special commission of the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* Executive Committee in 1929.⁶³

Despite the legally guaranteed inviolability of the previously stipulated autonomy principles, crucial changes were made in the legal status of autonomous republics and *oblasts*. First of all, autonomous republics virtually lost their status of constituent members of the RSFSR stipulated by the 1925 Constitution of the RSFSR (Section 1, Chapter 1, Article 2). Since the central economic management based on the central economic plans and budgets was established, the powers and competency of autonomous republics and *oblasts* were substantially reduced. The incorporation of authorities of autonomous republics and *oblasts* in the common system of administrative and territorial control based on the democratic centralism principle limited the independence of state organs regarding many matters within their competence. Moreover, the *kray* government bodies that executed the powers of supreme state organs in *krays*, and whose decrees and resolutions held supremacy in the autonomous republics and *oblasts* within the *krays*, were now established too. Executive committees of soviets of *kray* (*oblast*) units had powers to cancel, amend, or suspend resolutions of all inferior authorities. For the purpose of intensifying supervision and control over the activities of the government bodies of the autonomous entities, and over the execution of laws, representatives, and leaders of the party and state authorities of the *kray* units were always included as members in the republican state institutions.

Thus, though autonomous republics preserved some features of constituent members of the federation, in actuality *kray* (*oblast*) units, whose authorities were provided with the right of legislative initiative with central government bodies of the RSFSR, were now constituent members of the RSFSR. Representatives from *kray* (*oblast*) units had the right to participate as consulting parties in those sessions held by the RSFSR central authorities, where issues related to the *krays* (*oblasts*) and to their constituents were discussed. The *kray* authorities now exercised the crucial control over the economy of the *krays* (*oblasts*) and of their members (in particular over re-appropriated credits, financial resource reallocation, additional funding, etc.).

The objective of the *kray* party and the Soviet organs was to support national *oblasts* in their socialism-building process. When Kalmykia formed a part of the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray*, the rates of its cooperative and collective farm building grew significantly. Taking into account the

limited capacities of collective farms established by the middle of 1929 (74 collective farms with 1,037 households) and small production associations (90 associations with 1,350 households), which comprised mainly farm laborers and the poor (6.7%), the *oblast's* party and Soviet organs started seeking ways to consolidate the infrastructure for collective and state enterprises. In order to resolve this problem, they relied mainly on expropriating the property of former Kalmyk feudal lords and well-to-do cattle breeders and transferring the confiscated means to *kolkhozes*ⁱⁱ and *sovkhozes*.ⁱⁱⁱ Moreover, they used this method with the purpose to accelerate the collectivization process.

Under the hard conditions during the period of economic revival in 1926 and 1927, the *oblast's* party and the Soviet organs attempted to expropriate a part of movable property belonging to the rich groups of the population under the pretense of “liberating” them from excess cattle and “liberating” the poor of the countryside from exploitation. However, the key objective of such actions was to suppress the economic development of robust farms, while the state aimed to demonstrate the advantages of collective farms. That is why economic instruments were employed along with political methods.

In 1928, a differential fee for using pasturelands was introduced in Kalmykia. Households of farm laborers, poor people, and peasants of average means, that is, almost 71% of the total number of peasant households, were exempted from the fee for using pasturelands. Moreover, they did not have to pay any taxes either. The entire tax burden (pastureland fees and single agricultural tax) was imposed on economically stable and well-to-do households. The peasants' households of this category made only 6.85% of the *oblast's* total number of peasants' households in 1928, yet they had to pay 87% of the total single agricultural tax levied for the 1928–1929 financial year.⁶⁴

In the middle of 1929, the Kalmyk *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee came to an agreement with the *Kray* Party and the Soviet organs, as well as Central committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, and initiated the preparation for expropriation from the former Kalmyk feudal lords, and, moreover, from the Kalmyk households that became economically prosperous in the Soviet era, as well as from the

ⁱⁱ Translator's note: *kolkhoz*—a collective farm.

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: *sovkhoz*—a Soviet state farm.

households of Russian and Ukrainian migrants. Thus, not only political principles (liquidation of the well-to-do part of the population as exploiters and *kulaks*) but also economic considerations (the expropriated property was converted into socialist property) formed the grounds for the expropriation.

A special system of political and administrative bodies was created in Kalmykia in early October 1929. This system included: the *kray* "triumvirate" comprising secretary of the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) A. Chugunov, executive secretary of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Party Committee Kh. Dzhalikov and representative from the *Kray* Unified State Political Administration (OGPU) Taranov; the *oblast's* commission headed by chairman of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee A. Pyurbeyev; the *ulus* commissions headed by the chairmen of the *ulus* executive committees with mandatory representation from the *Oblast* Executive Committee. These bodies were to conduct compulsory expropriation of production means owned by former feudal lords and well-to-do cattle breeders (i.e., expropriation from all households having over 200 cattle head in cattle-breeding *uluses* and over 100 cattle head in crop farming and fishery *uluses*).

The *oblast* commission issued an instruction before the campaign to define the criteria for expulsion (i.e., the households with more than 200 head of bovine animals in cattle-breeding *uluses*, and the households with more than 100 head of bovine animals in the mixed agricultural and cattle-breeding *uluses* were subject to repression). The labor norms for peasant households were stipulated, too. The following norms were stipulated for agricultural and fishery *uluses*: one horse or camel, or a couple of oxen with harness, two cows, two carts, five sheep of a common breed, one plough, and one harrow per one household; the following norms were set up for cattle-breeding *uluses*: one horse or camel, or a couple of oxen, four cows, four heifers, 15 sheep of a common breed, and one cart per one household. According to the commission, the norms were to ensure the required minimum of subsistence for peasant households and economy management based on personal labor only. For the same purposes, they stipulated for allocation of the confiscated cattle to farm laborers and poor people: two cattle head per household in crop farming and fishery *uluses* and six cattle head per household in cattle-breeding *uluses*. However, the major part of the confiscated cattle was to go to *sovkhozes* (50%) and *kolkhozes* (35%) as an interest-free loan with the repayment period of ten years.

After the preparatory work aimed at raising the consciousness of the poor people in the countryside, the legal ground for carrying out the ex-

propriation was adopted on March 20, 1925, based on the order issued by the Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom of the USSR about the expulsion of former estate owners from their, now nationalized, estates. An order issued by the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee on October 16, 1929, which stipulated the expulsion of former *noyons*, *zaisangs*, and guardians along with wealthy cattle- and sheep-breeders from the areas of their economic activities in the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* (the draft order was examined and approved by the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on October 10, 1929), provided the necessary legal ground. Despite the ban on the expulsion of former estate owners provided for by the legislation of the USSR and RSFSR in 1927 and 1928, the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee permitted the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee to publish the order about expropriation on its own behalf and implement it "as an exception to the generally accepted procedure."⁶⁵

The expropriation and expulsion began unexpectedly at 5 a.m. on October 17, 1929, the following day after the approval of the above-mentioned order. The operation took two days, followed by three months of "remainder cleansing" measures, conducted with the participation of officers from the *oblast's* NKVD (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs) and OGPU (Unified State Political Administration). The Soviet authorities, as a result, acquired an experience of banishing a large group of persons (231 landlords were expelled from the *oblast* and 84 were resettled within the *oblast* so that they could not reconstruct their households), which they would use later carrying out the *dekulakization* campaign and the repression of entire peoples.

The people to be expelled were gathered at a collecting station, usually an open-air ground fenced with barbed wire and guarded by armed guards. Before the dispossessed people were convoyed to the places of their settlement, they had to perform heavy compulsory labor under guard. The people were driven from the collecting station to the closest railway stations by cars or carts at their own expense. Each banished family was allowed to take a trivet, vessel, cups, spoons, axe, saw, spade, 500 rubles, supply of food for three months, and clothes for a year. They were also allowed to take a horse, cart, plough, harrow, and 120 kg of press hay per five families for managing their households at their destination. Families belonging to the first category were expelled to a remote part of the country, for example, the Sverdlovsk, Omsk, Akmolinsk, Karaganda, and other *oblasts*, while families from the second one were convoyed to underdeveloped areas in the Nizhne-Volzhski *Kray*.

The poor people of the countryside enthusiastically contributed to the implementation of the confiscation and expulsion policy. They had been adequately ideologically indoctrinated and were also rather keen to bring their well-to-do neighbors to bankruptcy and punishment, appropriating their property for free (in fact, poor people obtained 8,935 cattle head in terms of bovine animals—or 14.5%—of the total number of the confiscated cattle).⁶⁶

Under the decree issued by the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee on October 16, 1,543 horses, 742 camels, 1,995 oxen, 11,670 head of bovine animals, and 173,954 head of sheep were confiscated that in terms of bovine animals amounted to 61,623 head, that is, the value of 3,262,197 rubles, along with agricultural equipment, with the total cost of 458,599 rubles (14% of the cattle cost). From the confiscated means of production, 30,397 cattle head (49.5%) including 183 horses, 176 camels, 760 oxen, 2,797 head of bovine animals, and 82,990 sheep, as well as agricultural equipment worth 35,826 rubles, were transferred for the improvement of the old and organization of three new *sovkhoses*; 18,879 head (30.6%) including 335 horses, 395 camels, 720 oxen, 4,209 head of bovine animals, 64,265 sheep, as well as agricultural equipment worth 51,482 rubles, were used for the improvement of the old and organization of new *kolkhoses*.⁶⁷

As a result of the expropriation and transfer of a substantial part of production means to the property of old and newly emerging *kolkhoses*, the collectivization of agriculture gathered a rapid pace. While only 7.6% of the *oblast*'s peasant households were united into different collective enterprises of various types before the autumn of 1929, with mainly peasants' labor and land shares (in crop farming *aimaks*) made common resources, this share reached 15% by the end of November of the same year and 26% by January 1930. The end of 1929 and early 1930 were different from the previous period in terms of collectivization rates, and also because the collective farms started using common production means, obtained from the rich part of the population through compulsory expropriation and provided by the state rather than made using their own labor.

From the beginning of 1930, both in Kalmykia and in all of the country the collectivization process was intensified, accompanied by "exaggerations" and "distortions." It is known that the order *On the Collectivization Rate and State Aid in the Building of Kolkhoses* issued by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) on January 5, 1930 was an official trigger in the race for the "collectivization rate." This order and intense pressure from central authorities drove the leaders of the party organization and Soviet organs in

the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* to adopt a resolution to achieve an 80% level of collectivization among the *oblast's* peasants' households by the spring of 1930, reaching the 100% level by the autumn. Moreover, in the same month the Political Bureau issued another decree approving of the measures aimed at the liquidation of *kulak* households in the areas of total collectivization.

Under the directives from the center, the *kray* and *oblast* party organizations aggressively increased the collectivization rate in the *oblast*. While 7,750 peasants' households (26.8%) formed *kolkhozes* in early January in 1930, by the early April of the same year the number grew to 20,082 (69.5%) collectivized households in the cattle breeding and crop farming *aimaks* and up to 64% in the fishery *aimaks*. Undoubtedly there were many "bubble" *kolkhozes*, which appeared on paper only. The impossibility to implement the directives, threat of punishment for failure to comply with them and all the stir around them made the local officials resort to such methods as over-bureaucratic administration, intensified *dekulakization*, mass deprivation of middle-class peasants of their right to vote, and putting moral pressure on the population to the extent of closing down *khuruls* and churches.

At its early violent stages, the collectivization campaign would typically bring about peasants' apparent dissatisfaction and protests, which often took shape of overtly anti-Soviet manifestations. The well-known researcher of the *kolkhoz* formation process in Kalmykia, Yu.O. Oglayev refers to the following example: On March 12, 1930 an armed revolt was organized by more than 100 mounted peasants that set off towards the *ulus* headquarters in the Ikimankhansky, Ikibukhusovsky, and Bagabukhusovsky *uluses*. Joint forces of the local and Stalingrad militia suppressed it.⁶⁸ The OGPU and NKVD organs used this armed protest as a pretext for repressing the Kalmyk clergy. In 1930 and 1931, the NKVD "triumvirates" sentenced 53 Buddhist clergymen including Shadzhin Lama of the Kalmyk people, Sharap Tepkin,⁶⁹ without trial or investigation to various terms in labor camps.

Peasants would destroy cattle, agricultural equipment, and other property before joining *kolkhozes*. As compared to 1929, the cattle count in Kalmykia fell down by 30% to 35% during the winter and spring of 1930 (approximately from 780,575 to 530,790 head). As compared to 1928, the cattle count in the *oblast* decreased by 1.6 times by early 1930 (in the RSFSR by 1.26 times).⁷⁰

In March and April 1930, the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) adopted a number of documents aimed

at elimination of the distortions in the *kolkhoz* formation process and violations of its principles, which allegedly resulted from negligence on the part of local officials. On March 2, the Pravda newspaper published the *Model Charter of Agricultural Cooperative Associations* and article *Dizzy with Success* by Josef Stalin. Josef Stalin accused local officials of “adventurous attempts to solve all problems of socialist building” in no time and made an unexpected conclusion that the 50% level of collectivization achieved by February 20 was a success confirming that “the village had made a radical turn to socialism for sure.”⁷¹ Local officials were to “nail down the achieved success and rely on it for the further consistent advance.” The latter directive puzzled officials because they did not know what to do next—to correct the situation or to nail it down.

The “afflux” of peasants to *kolkhozes* was followed by a “reflux.” Only 6,000 cattle breeding and crop farming households of the *oblast* out of 20,082 collectivized by April 1, 1930 survived to April 20. The rest of them were dissolved, that is, the collectivization level decreased from 69.5% to 20.7%. A similar situation shaped in the fishery districts (with a drop from 64% to 17%). The “bubble” *kolkhozes* and those established by force vanished. The available data on the number of peasants that remained in the *kolkhozes* proves that there were supporters of collectivization as well, its true enthusiasts and followers. These were mainly poor peasants and some peasants of average means, whose support served as an engine in the process of collectivization.

The *kray* and *oblast* party organizations analyzed the outcomes of the first phase of collectivization and issued a resolution to “nail down and develop” the *kolkhoz* movement. The collectivization level in the *oblast* increased from 20.7% after the “reflux” to 24.5% by January 1931. At the same time, measures were taken to strengthen and develop *sovkhoses*. While in 1929 Kalmyk *sovkhoses* had 1.34 % head of the total number of the *oblast*’s cattle, in 1930 this number reached 18%. From that time, active steps were taken to “freeze out” individual households (their share consequently dropping from 97.7% to 62% in the period in question).⁷²

As the new phase of collectivization began, an abrupt turn from the policy of *kulaks*’ restriction and suppression to the policy of their annihilation as a class took place, which complied with Lenin’s vision of the liquidation of the exploiter classes. On January 30, 1930, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) adopted a resolution *On Measures for Liquidation of Kulak Households in Areas of Total Collectivization* that envisaged confiscation of production means, cattle, household and dwelling houses, enterprises,

and seed stock from *kulaks*. All confiscated property was to be transferred to the *kolkhoz* non-distributable assets.

The resolution divided *dekulakized* persons into three categories: 1) “anti-revolutionary activists”—participants of anti-Soviet and anti-*kolkhoz* manifestations (they were arrested and their families banished to the country’s remote regions); 2) “wealthy *kulaks* and former semi-landlords that actively opposed collectivization” (they and their families were banished to remote areas); 3) “other” *kulaks* (they were moved to special settlements within the bounds of their former residence). The resolution said that the number of dispossessed *kulaks* was not to exceed 3–5% of the total number of peasants’ households. It also stipulated the numbers of the “limited contingents” to be banished to remote parts of the country. Authorities of the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* were instructed to banish and resettle 60,000 households (families) that belonged to the first category and 150,000 from the second one.⁷³ The repression against peasants was to be launched in accordance with the instruction of the Central Executive Committee and Sovnarkom of the USSR of February 4, 1930 and with secret order No. 44/21 of February 2, 1930 issued by the OGPU and signed by G.G. Yagoda.⁷⁴

Moreover, on February 20, 1930, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) adopted a special decree *On Collectivization and Fighting Kulaks in the National and Economically Backward Regions* which obliged local party organizations “to pursue a tough policy of restriction and suppression against *kulaks* and *bey*s.”^{iv} Based on the above-mentioned decrees adopted by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) on January 30 and February 20, 1930, the Bureau of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Committee passed a resolution on June 1, 1931 concerning a second phase of *dekulakization*, aimed at dispossessing and banishing *kulak* households from the Kalmyk *oblast*, with stipulations regarding the terms of the campaign (from June 15 to July 15, 1931) and the target number of persons to be repressed (at least 900 households). Special commissions—political “triumvirates” (at the level of *oblast*, comprising First Secretary of the *Oblast* Party Committee Kh.M. Dzhalyskov as the Chairman, Chairman of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee A.P. Pyurbeyev, and Head of the *Oblast* OGPU De-

^{iv} Translator’s note: *bey*—during the *dekulakization* campaign it was used to refer to well-to-do local leaders, usually in the areas populated by Turkish peoples. The original term is used to refer to various Turkish dignitaries.

partment P.I. Kishkin) and *ulus* “triumvirates” comprising secretaries of *ulus* committees of the All-Russian Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), chairmen of *ulus* executive committees and OGPU plenipotentiaries—were set up to conduct the *dekulakization* campaign in the *oblast* and *uluses*. A special commission of the All-Russian Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) comprising A.A. Andreyev, P.P. Postyshev, Ya.E. Rudzutak, G.G. Yagoda, and others exercised general control over the campaign in the country.

The political “triumvirates” were charged with ascribing “*kulak*” households to the categories and making lists of peasants to be dispossessed. They were also to account and transfer the confiscated property and production means to *kolkhozes* and state financial authorities. By the end of June 1931, the *oblast*’s political “triumvirate” approved the lists of peasants’ households to be dispossessed and banished. The target number was exceeded by 1,250 households in the first and second categories and by 146 households in the third category. The destiny of these people was at the disposal of the local “triumvirates” and activists from the poor peasants. Although the figures surpassed the target by 66%, they still fell within the bounds of the stipulated norm (from 3% to 5% of the total number of households): some 1,400 families or 7,500 persons were to be *dekulakized*.

The strict allotment of target figures among *uluses*, the imposed procedure for conducting the forced action and the very tone of the instructions and specific orders resulted in administrative abuses and excesses with regard to the targets set by central authorities. As many as 1,525 households (instead of the targeted 900) were dispossessed in the *oblast* and 1,121 households (6,157 people) were resettled beyond the bounds of Kalmykia in a very short time (3–4 days). The means of production, cattle, and other property confiscated from the dispossessed people were transferred to non-distributable assets of *kolkhozes*. In fact, the *dekulakization* campaign turned into a kind of civil war in the countryside due to the methods that were used. Poor people were actively involved in identifying and dispossessing *kulaks*. According to historian Yu.O. Oglayev, poor people would catch the *kulaks* that attempted to flee and deliver them to the local authorities.⁷⁵

When this stage of the dispossession campaign was over and the number of *kolkhozes* increased, the party and Soviet organs proceeded to the renewal of the personnel in government bodies.

The new reelection campaign to the *oblast* soviets was launched in January and was brought to a close by the *oblast* congress of soviets in

May and June 1930. In the course of the campaign, special attention was paid to identifying the voters' social status. This was done in two phases. First 7,584 persons (10.2% of the *oblast's* electorate) found themselves on the list of those deprived of the right to vote. The *oblast's* election commission examined the issue and had to admit that the lists contained mistakes. Village and *ulus* election commissions revised and modified the lists, leaving 3,146 persons (4%) deprived of the right to vote. The commissions stated that these people had been engaged in private trade, had non-labor revenues, served for religious and cult institutions or for the tsar's law enforcement and judicial organs, had been convicted for crimes, etc.

Voters' participation in the formation of village soviets was slightly more active as compared to the previous campaign and made up 57.5% (42,474 people). The total of 63.9% of Kalmyks and 40.2% of Russians took part in election assemblies.

The *ulus* branch of the state authorities comprised 2,726 members of village soviets (3.4% of the *oblast's* electorate). Almost half (48.2%) among the members of village soviets were new members; the share of women (20.4%) and Russians (from 17.6 to 25.3%) slightly increased. As many as 541 delegates from the *ulus* congresses of soviets participated in elections of members for the *oblast* congress of soviets and 327 of them were elected.

The Ninth *Oblast* Congress of Soviets held from May 29 to May 31 1930 formed the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee comprising 68 members.⁷⁶

The next campaign for the reelection of the soviets was held the same year because the reform of the *oblast* administrative and territorial division was completed, that is when the *oblast* government body system was stabilized, and comprised five *ulus*, one municipal, one settlement and 97 village soviets.⁷⁷

The preparatory work for the next campaign for reelecting the soviets was launched in October 1930. It was carried out in compliance with the instruction on elections to the soviets approved by the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the USSR on October 3, 1930. Election commissions formed at executive committees of soviets were in charge of the activities related to organizing and holding the reelection. Thus, election commissions were subordinate to executive committees. Judging by their membership (chaired by the chairman or one of the leaders of executive committees; with representatives from trade union and party organizations as members; with mandatory participation of workers, *kolkhoz* members and military men), they acted as state and party organs to ensure

that the government bodies were formed in compliance with the party directives.

The instruction contained detailed regulations of the procedure for depriving of and restoring the voting rights (in the following cases: at least five-year engagement in productive or other socially useful labor, loyalty to the authorities, and membership in trade unions). According to the instruction, an electoral assembly was entitled to hold the election to the soviet if there were at least 40% of the people entitled to vote in the electoral district.

The resolution of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee issued on November 21, 1930 stipulated representative norms for *oblast* soviets based on a decree adopted by the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on November 10, 1930 and entitled *On the Norms of Representation and Election Procedure to Congresses of Soviets for Autonomous Oblasts and Individual National Districts*. The membership of *ulus* soviets was to be based on the following norms: one delegate from 500 *ulus* people, and one delegate from 100 people of municipal, settlement, and village soviets. Delegates for *ulus* congresses of soviets were to be elected at organizational plenary sessions of village soviets based on one delegate from 300 people of a village or settlement; delegates for *oblast* congresses of soviets were to be elected based on one delegate from 500 *ulus* people.

The new campaign of reelection for soviets was different from the previous ones in its objectives and goals. Its slogan was "Liquidation of *kulaks* is an important objective of soviets." Since the party concluded that the class struggle was exacerbated, as bodies of the proletariat dictatorship, the soviets were to launch a decisive battle against *kulaks*. That is why soviets, election commissions, and party organs paid much attention to compiling lists of people deprived of the right to vote, as well as social structure of government officials at all levels. The total of 3,862 people (4.6% of the electorate) including 1,272 former employees of religious institutions were deprived of their voting rights in the election campaign.⁷⁸

The reelection was held in all village soviets in December 1930. The voter turnout was much higher (72.2%) as compared to the stipulated norms and the previous year's figure. As many as 2,726 people including 630 (23.1%) women, 2,050 (75.2%) Kalmyks, 624 (22.9%) Russians, 668 (24.5%) party and Komsomol members, 1,126 (41.3%) people elected for the first time, and 796 (29.2%) illiterate people were elected to village and settlement soviets of the *oblast*. At the organizational plenary sessions of

village soviets held the same month, 662 delegates, who represented only 3.5% of the *oblast's* electorate, were elected to the *ulus* congresses of soviets.⁷⁹

The *ulus* congresses of soviets were organized and held in January and February 1931. The total of 537 delegates took part in their work, that is, the turnover made up 81.1% of the total number of delegates elected at plenary sessions of the village soviets. The membership of the congresses was as follows: 39 (16.6%) women, 386 (71.8%) Kalmyks, 132 (24.7%) Russians, and 290 (54.0%) party and Komsomol members. Delegates of the *ulus* congresses of soviets (537 people or 0.7% of the total number of voters in the *oblast*) elected 378 delegates to form the *oblast's* congress of soviets.

In fact, only 277 (73.2%) delegates out of 378, including 127 people elected for the first time (46%), 76 (20%) women, 265 (70%) Kalmyks, 101 (26.7%) Russians, and 257 (67.9%) party and Komsomol members, participated in the Tenth *Oblast* Congress of Soviets held on February 5–8. The congress delegates elected members of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee comprising 72 members and 17 candidates on the last day of their session.⁸⁰ The Communist faction of the congress introduced members of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee, who were approved unanimously by open voting for the list.

The membership of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee was as follows: 10 women (11%), 53 Kalmyks (60%), 32 Russians (36.1%), and 74 party members (83.3%). Only 19 people (21.3%) were elected as members and candidates of the *Oblast* Executive Committee for the first time.⁸¹ Thus, the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee was stable in its membership and majority of its seats belonged to Communists. It can be explained by the fact that permanent personnel of the party and state institutions had been established in the *oblast* by the time.

The rates of *kolkhoz* building in Kalmykia grew considerably in the course of the *dekulakization* campaign. The total number of collectivized peasants' households in the *oblast* increased from 24.5% in January to 66.8% by early August 1931. The households had 47.1% of the total number of the *oblast's* cattle stock and 72.9% of all areas under crops. It is natural that the socialist sector of the economy grew along with the cattle stock in the nine *sovkhoses* (up to 77.8%).⁸²

The “rapid” growth in the number of *kolkhoses* during the process of *kulak* liquidation could be explained not only by the peasants' “political maturity” developed in a week or month (as Soviet historiography put it).⁸³ The apparent key reasons for the “rapid” intensification of the *kol-*

khoz movement were the following: poor people and middle-class peasants realized that the unrestrained administrative violence against peasants during the campaign, the hasty arrests without compliance with any formal procedures, judicial proceedings, and the repression were not mere “exaggerations” or “distortions” any longer, but manifestations of the official policy pursued by the party and state authorities. In addition to the psychological pressure, there was one more factor that made peasants join *kolkhozes*: the confiscated property, production means, and cattle were handed over to *kolkhozes* as contributions of the poor people and farm laborers joining the *kolkhozes*. All that was there for them to do was to write an application for admission.

The newly-emerged *kolkhozes* scarcely gained their strength in 1931 when they had to fulfill the grain procurement plan with the target of 253,590 *centners* (for the grain-growing Zapadnyi ulus) that was five times more than was provided for by the plan for 1929. Despite enormous efforts and extraordinary measures (organizational and administrative including involvement of party nuclei, judicial and investigating authorities, repression, searches, total expropriation of the grain that could be found, repeated straw thrashing, etc.) taken by *oblast* and *ulus* party organizations, the grain procurement plan in the Zapadnyi ulus was hardly fulfilled by 90.3% by the middle of January 1932. Though the plan was excessive and impossible to fulfill, the “guilty” were found all the same. As many as 63 well-to-do peasants’ households in the *ulus* were put on trial for their failure to fulfill the plan and were imprisoned or banished while their property was confiscated. The Bureau of the Party Oblast Committee that was in charge of the campaign was aware of the severe economic and political consequences the campaign could entail and shuffled off the blame and responsibility for “taking too serious administrative measures aimed at grain procurement” on the party organization of the *ulus*.

Such an excessive plan resulted in tremendous difficulties with food supply for the peasants of the *ulus*. The grain expropriations in the Zapadnyi ulus and the following breakdown of food turnover badly affected the population of cattle-breeding *uluses* as well. In the Zapadnyi ulus, peasants were doomed to famine. In January 1932, there were only 5 and 10 *poods* of flour and 17 and 250 *centners* of seeds in the food reserves of the Rose Luxembourg and Karl Marx *kolkhozes*, respectively (the flour was intended for tractor operator students). The *kolkhoz* members had to sell their clothes to buy bread. There were cases of organized absence from work. People demanded bread and threatened to butcher all cattle for food. A similar situation took place in all other *ulus* households.

With their scarce resources, *kolkhozes* found themselves in an economically weak position by the spring of 1932. That is why the grain procurement process was very difficult in 1932, even harder than in 1931. In spite of the expropriation of the grain obtained by *kolkhoz* members for their work under the pretense of incorrect calculations, the grain procurement plan was fulfilled by January 1933 only by 75.4%.⁸⁴ According to the party and Soviet authorities, the plan was not fulfilled mainly due to *kulaks'* opposition and backwardness of some *kolkhoz* members. This position of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Communist Party Committee was a result of the policy pursued by the country leaders, which considered repression a means to ensure grain procurements.

However, under pressure from the central authorities, the *kolkhoz* building and socialist transformation of the agricultural sector kept gathering pace in Kalmykia. As many as 81 agricultural cooperative associations, 150 associations, and four communes that united 72.8% of the total number of peasants' households and collectivized 58.1% of cattle in the *oblast* were organized in 1932. 30% of the total number of bovine animals, 43% of sheep, and 22.3% of planted areas belonged to 15 cattle-breeding *sovkhozes*. A considerable share of cattle (52.7%) belonged to individual peasants' households at the time.

Tractor and hay-mowing stations (HMS) played an important part in the process of collectivization and consolidation of the public economy. There were two tractor stations that had 81 tractors (with the total capacity of 2,376 h.p.) and two combine harvesters in the *oblast* by 1932. There were 975 horse-drawn hay mowers, 1,207 droppers, 373 horse-drawn rakes, 20 tractors, and one car in 25 HMS.⁸⁵ At the same time, the tractor and hay-mowing stations were low-powered and cultivated 25% of planted areas only (the tractor and hay-mowing stations cultivated 23,499 hectares out of 94,830 hectares of the total planted area in the *oblast* and mowed the hay from the area of 385 thousand hectares, which was too little for stationary-based cattle breeding in 1932).

However, the process of "planned settlement" of nomad households was in full swing by that time. By 1932, 70% of the Kalmyk households were settled down. As far as genuine care about the formation of elemental and necessary conditions were concerned—such as housing for the population, household outbuildings, social infrastructure and, most importantly, fodder stock for thousands of cattle—it was attended to gradually, already as a part of the socialist building in the villages, as Soviet historiography put it in an unbiased manner. Therefore, they planned to build settlements, housing and household outbuildings, and perform land sur-

veying and reclamation work at the second stage of converting nomads to the settled way of life (the second five-year plan).

The new economy was formed with great difficulties, efforts, and expenditures in the course of the second five-year plan's implementation (1933–1937). Along with cattle breeding, crop farming was developing and the material and technical base for agriculture was formed. Some qualitative shifts were observed in the *kolkhoz* building by 1935. The share of collectivized households increased slightly as compared to 1932 to make up 83%. The simplest forms of associations such as communes were amalgamated and were regulated as cooperative associations. There were 104 agricultural cooperative associations and 10 associations in the *oblast*. At the same time, the cattle count in *kolkhozes* increased by 46%. The cattle count in the *oblast* increased from 712,712 in 1931 to 942,700 head in 1935 (approximately by 32%). The growth in the cattle count in *sovkhoses* made up 65.5%. Simultaneously individual peasants' households were virtually driven out of the economy and cattle count belonging to individual households fell from 52.7% in 1931 down to 18.3% in 1934. As for the socialist sector, it had 54% of cattle and 94% of sheep.⁸⁶

The vehicle stock in two tractor and 25 hay-mowing stations increased from 108 to 131 vehicles in the same period. The planted area expanded from 94,830 (1932) to 131,813 hectares (1934). However, the socialist sector still failed to cope with the state agricultural product procurement plans despite the aid the the political departments of tractor stations and *sovkhoses* (established in 1933) rendered to the *ulus* party and Soviet organizations, which implemented the procurement plans by the old methods. In 1934, *kolkhozes*, *sovkhoses*, and state enterprises fulfilled the state agricultural product procurement plans as follows: meat—87.4%; wool—98.2%; milk and butter—84%; grain—87% (the plan stipulated for 111,968 *centners* but only 97,412 *centners* of grain were procured).⁸⁷

The collectivization rate in the fishing industry was higher. It was nearly completed (99%) by 1934; private households having been virtually altogether driven out from the fishing industry. The first stage of the Lagansk Fish Canning Plant, as well as the Caviar and Balyk Combined Works and Floating Fish Canning Plant were commissioned the same year.

An evident shift for the better took place in the development of Kalmyk economy and culture in 1935: in compliance with the plan, the socialist transformation of agriculture was practically over and its material and technical base was strengthened by that time. Along with cattle breeding, crop farming was developing on a broad scale. According to the plan,

the nomadic population was transferred to a settled way of life almost completely. But what did it really mean? As compared to 1920 (given the catastrophic losses brought about by the Civil War), the cattle stock of the *oblast* increased by 7.4 times, planted areas—by 17.3 times; *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes* had 340 tractors, 62 combine harvesters, 121 cars, etc. As many as 38 agronomists, 11 mechanic engineers, four civil engineers, five hydraulic engineers, and nine land surveyors, as well as other experts were working in the agricultural sector.⁸⁸ However, as compared to the period preceding mass collectivization (1928), the cattle stock of the *oblast* reached only 76.1% in 1935 (the figure for the entire Russia made up 56.4% in the same period).

The Kalmyk industry came into being; communication, transportation, and road building were developing. The length of telegraph lines increased from 405 km (1920) to 4,336 km (1935); the car fleet increased from 14 to 309 cars. Air connection to the cities of Astrakhan, Armavir, and Stalingrad was established. The construction of different settlements and the town of Elista was going on. In early 1933, the population of Elista made up 8,313 people; there were 840 houses and 56 public buildings. Housing premises were mainly built on the basis of adobe and reed materials and without any amenities. The mean housing area per resident amounted to as little as 3.4 m².

There were pedagogical and agricultural technical schools, party and Soviet school, 225 elementary and junior high schools where 25.5 thousand students studied and 725 teachers worked. There were 74 infant schools, 108 village reading rooms, 21 libraries, a drama theater, and some 100 cinema projectors in the Kalmyk *oblast*. Newspapers and magazines in the Russian and Kalmyk languages were published. The total of 26 hospitals, 20 outpatient departments, 45 paramedic stations, and four different dispensaries along with specialized medical aid stations, where 51 doctors and 230 paramedics were employed, were opened. The incidence rate of the diseases that used to be widely spread was considerably reduced. All these positive phenomena in the economic and cultural life changed the social structure of the *oblast*'s population.⁸⁹

The formation of the autonomous *oblast* made it possible to reunite Kalmyks living in different regions in a single state formation. Many Kalmyks moved to Kalmykia from the Don, Ural, Terek, and Orenburg *oblasts*. The *oblast*'s population increased by almost 15,000 people for the first five years and amounted to 141,594 people by 1926. With the migrants' influx, the growth in the share of Kalmyks in the *oblast* from 67.8% to 75.5% took place. However, the ethnic composition of the Kal-

myk Autonomous Republic changed substantially due to intensified international migration of the population and development of the people's economy and culture. In particular, the share of the indigenous people decreased in succeeding years. According to the data of 1933, the population of Kalmykia increased by almost 26% from 1926 and made up 178,235 persons including 121,515 (68.1%) Kalmyks, that is, the share of indigenous population fell by 7.4%. However, in one year only (from 1931 to 1932)—the year of the second stage of *dekulakization*—the number of Kalmyks decreased from 126,000 to 121,515 persons, that is, by 4,485 persons (3.6%), while the number of Russians decreased from 54,256 to 51,931 persons, that is, by 2,325 persons (4.3%).⁹⁰ Even if we do not take into consideration the natural growth of population, the number of repressed persons amounted to some 7,000 during the second phase of the *dekulakization* campaign.

The social structure of the *oblast's* population underwent no serious changes. The total number of industry, transportation, construction, and agriculture workers made up 16,000 people in 1932 (about 20% of the employed population in the *oblast*) including 4,493 *sovkhoz* workers (which led practically the same way of life as *kolkhoz* members by the type of their labor and living conditions), almost 4,500 workers—at tractor and hay-mowing stations—, and about 6,000 employees at the fishing industry.⁹¹ The social structure of the *oblast's* population by occupation was as follows: *kolkhoz* peasants—about 50%, working class—about 20%, officials—less than 15%, and individual peasants—4.5%.

The Soviet state was actively implementing its national political program as an integral part of the socialism-building program. In this connection, as history shows, no deviations from the general line were permitted and no distinctive features in the people's historic development were taken into account in the course of the building of socialist society. Following the provisions of the Marxist and Leninist evolution theory, the Soviet authorities aimed their efforts at liquidating the actual inequality of backward peoples in the social and economic sense, omitting the capitalist stage of development. Mobilization of efforts and generous aid on the part of the state made it possible to enhance these peoples' cultural, social, and economic development.

In spite of all these impressive facts, the Kalmyk economy remained weak and poorly balanced: sheep breeding was mainly developing in an extensive way and was turning into a branch producing raw materials only. There were two or three tractors and one car per one farm (either collectivized or state-owned) on average. Only three low-capacity brick

works (which yielded 6,420 thousand tons of brick in 1934) and small-sized print shops represented the Kalmyk industry. Though the total length of roads in the *oblast* made up 4,612 km, there were only 4% of graded ones. In spite of sufficient volumes of agricultural raw materials, no processing industries were developed except for fishery. This resulted in a substantial budget deficit. The budget revenues grew very slowly: while it amounted to 20.9% in 1931, it was equal to 41.2% by 1935. The annual subvention was about 60%.⁹²

The party attached special significance to the formation of a common Soviet culture during the period. At the same time, national traditions and customs were degraded and sometimes even lost. The attack against religion was launched in the whole country, and it went on from 1920 to 1930, and, in particular, against Lamaism and Buddhism (temples were closed, sacred objects, ancient church manuscripts, and books were destroyed, precious stones were handed over to the economic department of the OGPU-NKVD of the USSR). Repressions and atheistic upbringing inflicted serious damage on the original national culture and best national traditions. Customs and languages were consigned to oblivion. Frequent written language changes contributed to the process as well.

As the socialist reconstruction of the people's economy was approaching its completion, new objectives in the field of economic, social, and cultural development required major changes in the country's administrative and territorial system, which had been formed, based on the economic zoning principles, and met the needs of the corresponding phase of development.

Under new conditions of centralized control, it was necessary to subdivide the current administrative and territorial units. A decree issued by the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on January 10, 1934 divided the Nizhne-Volzhsky *Kray* into the Saratov and Stalingrad *Krays*. The Kalmyk Autonomous Republic became a part of the latter.

Drastic changes took place in the administrative and territorial system of the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic in 1934 and 1935. First of all, one of the largest *uluses* of Kalmykia—Tsentralnyi (territory: 31,254 km², population: 50,100 people, 127 centers of population and 25 village soviets) was made smaller. The Chernozemelsky *ulus* (administrative center: the village of Yashkul) comprising six village soviets was separated from it in under the decree of the Presidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee.

According to a decree *On a New Group of Districts in the Stalingrad Kray and Uluses in the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic* issued by the Pre-

sidium of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on January 25, 1935, the Primorsky *ulus* (territory: 6,700 km², population: 50,700 people, 183 centers of population and 28 village soviets) was divided into the Dolbansky and Lagansky *uluses*. The same decree approved of the administrative and territorial system of the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic comprising seven *uluses* (Dolbansky, Lagansky, Zapadnyi, Privolzhsky, Sarpinsky, Tsentralnyi, and Chernozemelsky), which was legislated by Article 14, Constitution of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic of 1937.⁹³

A regular Soviet reelection campaign concurred with the completion of the administrative and territorial reform in the *oblast*. There were 98 village, one settlement, one municipal, and six *ulus* soviets headed by the *oblast*'s soviet by the time.

Soviet elections in Kalmykia were held in compliance with the 1930 electoral legislation of the USSR. The Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee concluded the preparatory work for holding the reelection of soviets by the end of September 1934. Reports of village soviets were scheduled for October 10–30; reelection of the village, municipal, and settlement soviets—for November 1–15, 1934; *ulus* congresses of soviets were to be held on one day—November 25. The representative norms for village soviets were stipulated based on one delegate from 100 village or settlement people, for *ulus* congresses of soviets—one delegate from 300 *ulus* people, and for the *oblast*'s congress of soviets—one delegate from 500 people residing in the *oblast*.

By the beginning of the election campaign, the local election commissions and executive committees almost completed depriving some categories of citizen in the *oblast* of their right to vote. In the course of the reelection campaign, the number of people deprived of the voting right was much lower than during the previous one. In the Zapadnyi *ulus*, after revision of the 1931 voter's lists, the number of persons deprived of their voting rights decreased from 620 to 97, and in the Privolzhsky *ulus* from 225 to 193. The total number of people deprived of the right to vote in the *oblast* decreased two-fold as compared to 1931.

The voter turnout for elections to village, municipal, and settlement soviets amounted to 79.4% in 1934. Even though this figure was higher than at the previous elections, it remained lower than in the country on the whole by almost 5%. As a result, 2,376 delegates including 673 (28.3%) women and 850 (35.8%) party and Komsomol members were elected to 98 village, one municipal, and one settlement soviets. Plenary sessions of village soviets formed *ulus* government bodies—*ulus* congresses of sovi-

ets, which, in their turn, elected 301 delegates to the *oblast* congress of soviets.⁹⁴

The Eleventh *Oblast* Congress of Soviets held on December 23 through December 27 concluded the 1934 election campaign. As many as 92% (277 people) appeared at the Congress. The party membership of the Congress was markedly different from all the previous ones by its quantity. The Kalmyk *Oblast* Party Committee managed to provide for a thumping majority (72%) of party and Komsomol members among delegates of the *Oblast* Congress of Soviets, that is, the share of party and Komsomol members at the *oblast* congresses increased from 44.6% (1924) to 72% (1934) for the ten years. For the same period, the share of women in the *oblast* government increased from 6.9 to 20.1% (58 delegates), share of Russians increased from 19.3% to 38.8%, and that of Kalmyks decreased from 79.5 to 63.1%.

At the concluding session held on December 27, 1934, the *Oblast* Congress of Soviets formed the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee comprising 95 members and 33 candidates upon the suggestion of the Communist faction.

The membership of the eleventh convocation of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Executive Committee was as follows: women—28 (22%), Kalmyks—85 (66%), Russians—38 (29.7%), and party members—110 (86%). Judging by the party membership, Communists held the majority of seats in the *Oblast* Executive Committee (86%); officials held the majority by the occupation (53.1%). Due to the increased number of delegates, 41 people (32%) were elected to the *Oblast* Executive Committee for the first time.⁹⁵

During the 1920s and 1930s the Soviet political organization of Kalmykia was developed further. The Communist party played the key role in the political system of Soviet society and acted as vanguard of the working class and leader of all state and public organizations (1937 Constitution of the RSFSR, Article 130). The *oblast's* party organization held a similar position in the political system of Kalmykia and exercised full control over political, cultural, and economic life in the society.

The leading position of Bolsheviks in the country “stipulated in the Constitution” made them keep their ranks “clean.” The so-called “big purge” in the party ranks in 1929 (from July to November) was carried out for the proclaimed purpose of “consolidating the party organization.” As a result, 282 persons were expelled from the Bolshevik party in the *oblast*, and 18 persons abandoned their membership on their own will. The total number of members in the *oblast* party organization decreased by 300

people—or by 16%, that is, twice as high as the corresponding figure for the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) on the whole. Moreover, the party imposed various penalties on 313 Communists, that is, their reputation was undermined and career suspended for a period of time. At the same time, workers from *sovkhozes* and tractor stations along with farm laborers—about 200 people—joined the party. Because the social status criterion for joining prevailed, the qualitative composition of the *oblast* party organization changed considerably (the share of “white-collar workers” had been almost 30% before the purge) and the number of candidates for the nomenclature membership decreased.

During the accelerated collectivization the *oblast* party organization was replenished, many *kolkhoz* members having joined it. The *oblast* party organization increased from 1,774 to 2,546 members (by 43.5%) for the period from 1930 to 1932 only.⁹⁶ Because of the regular purge carried out in 1933, the admission of new members to the party was suspended. Only 2,192 Communists remained in the ranks of the *oblast* party organization by the end of 1935, that is, the number of party members reduced by 354 persons (by 14%) as compared to 1932; the number of white-collar employees fell down to 19.5%. For the same period, the share of workers and peasants in the *oblast* party organization grew from 73% to 80.5%.⁹⁷ Though the literacy level among the Kalmyk population reached 38% by the early 1930s, the share of illiterate and semi-illiterate members of the *oblast* party organization made 80%.

Bolsheviks took control over national *oblasts* from the very first days of their rule to prevent decentralization of power and control. For this purpose, the institution of party “supervisors” acting in different *oblasts* under different names was established. Representatives from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) worked in Kalmykia on a permanent basis in the following positions: official representative (K.R. Gertsenberg from 1918 to 1921); Executive Secretary of the *Oblast* Party Executive Committee (I.R. Marbush-Stepanov from August 1921 to November 1927, as well as T.K. Borisov and I.K. Glukhov); Second Secretary of the *Oblast* Party Executive Committee (from January 1932 to November 1935—M.A. Burmistenko, who became the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine later); First Secretary of the *Oblast* Party Executive Committee (I.N. Karpov from November 1935 to the beginning of 1939).

Representatives of the native people were in the leading position in the *oblast* party organization for short periods at different times. For six

months since the moment of its establishment (from February to August 1921), A.Ch. Chapchayev was the Executive Secretary of the *Oblast* Party Committee. Kalmyk Kh.M. Dzhalykov was elected as the Executive Secretary in November 1927. He held this position until the beginning of 1934. A.P. Pyurbeyev was the First Secretary from January 1934 to November 1935. Both of them worked under the supervision of the representative from the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) M.A. Burmistenko, second secretary. As it is believed now, this kind of situation made the local party officials mere "puppets in power." They had to engage in not much more than phrase-making on paper, since they were unable to implement anything.⁹⁸

Trade unions that were under political control of the Bolshevik party played an important part in the Kalmyk political system. The party aimed at exercising control over enterprises and organizations, and at intensifying the labor of workers and employees not only through party and Komsomol nuclei but also through trade unions. That is why Bolsheviks took consistent care to enhance the growth of trade unions. The *oblast's* trade union organization increased almost threefold from 1925 to 1935 and made up about 15 thousand members.

The party organization attributed at least the same role in the development of the political system to the Komsomol. Historically, the Komsomol was the first organization to unite the youth in the whole country. Party organizations united the youth based on the Communist platform. The party provided a political guidance for the Komsomol and always considered the youth movement an integral part of the revolutionary labor movement and its upbringing a constituent in the struggle for the revolutionary transformation of society. That is why the *oblast* party organization paid much attention to attracting young people to the Young Communist League. The *oblast* Komsomol organization increased from 2,861 (in 1925) to 6,529 members (in 1935), that is, by 2.3 times. Its qualitative membership changed in the period as well. While only poor people and farm laborers formed a part of the Komsomol organization in 1925, it comprised workers from different enterprises and *sovkhoses* (1,066 people), *kolkhoz* youth (3,294 people), and students from schools and vocational schools (1,279 young people) in 1935.⁹⁹

Thus, party organizations provided the social basis not only for political and public associations, but also for the entire political system of Soviet Kalmykia. During the 15 years of its development as an autonomous entity, the formation of the social, cultural, economic, and political foundations for Kalmykia's statehood had been largely completed, thus laying

the basis for transforming the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* into the Kalmyk Autonomous Republic.

Summing up the social, economic, cultural, and political development of the Soviet society in the period up to the mid-1930s, the Communist party, as is well known, proclaimed a decisive victory of socialism in the country. In this connection, changes were made in the system and structure of government bodies, elements of democracy were introduced into electoral law, and renewal of the constitutional legislation of the country, as well as union and autonomous republics began.

In the same period, the country converted a number of autonomous *oblasts* and republics into state constituents of a higher rank.

The 15-year jubilee of the Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* concurred with this process and served as a ground for the supreme authority of the RSFSR to upgrade the status of the Kalmyk administrative-political autonomy to that of a state-political autonomy, that is, to make the Kalmyk autonomous *oblast* an autonomous republic. By a Decree issued on October 22, 1935 and taking into account the will of the Kalmyk working people, the Presidium of the All-Russian Executive Committee transformed the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* within its current borders into the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic.¹⁰⁰

Thus, having acquired the status of a socialist and national state, Kalmykia entered a new phase in its nation and state building process as a constituent member of the RSFSR. As a national state, the autonomous republic had its Constitution, legislation, supreme government organs, departmental bodies of state administration, judicial organs, territory populated by the native people that gave the name to the republic and other statehood attributes. In this connection, the party and state bodies of Kalmykia were to develop a draft constitution and to form the republic's supreme authorities in accordance with the relevant procedure.

Notes

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- 23 *Ibid.* 28.
- 24 *About the history of forming the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast*. 72.
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- 28 V.I. Lenin. *Complete collection of works*. Vol. 41. 342.
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- 30 *Ibid.* 82–84.
- 31 *List of guberniyas of the RSFSR (with the numbers of volosts) of August 1, 1921*. Moscow, 1921. 13; *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. R-3. Op. 2. D. 179. L. 57.
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- 34 *Ibid.* No. 18. Article 189; No. 24. Article 233; *Territorial and administrative division of the USSR as of January 1, 1925*. Moscow, 1925. 116–118.
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CHAPTER 5

The Kalmyk Soviet Autonomous Republic Under Totalitarianism and During the Stagnation Period

By the early 1930s, the bureaucratic centralization induced by the party was drawing to an end. Only formal elements of federalism remained from the federal state, and Stalin's repressive policy was actively imposed. However, the process of the Soviet national and state building and resolution of national problems were vigorously simulated. The issue related to transforming Kalmykia—that had been a national-state entity up to the period in question—into an autonomous national entity was now addressed under directives from the center.

The Kalmyk *Oblast's* Executive Committee prepared and held a session to regulate the legal issues of Kalmykia's new state status and to form new supreme representative (legislative) and executive government bodies of the autonomous republic. The Bureau of the *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) was in charge of the recruitment and appointment of executive personnel to the state bodies that were being formed.

The solemn jubilee session of the Kalmyk *Oblast's* Executive Committee regulated all issues related to the transformation of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* into the Autonomous Republic on November 2, 1935. When the autonomous state was established in accordance with the 1925 Constitution of the RSFSR, new government organs were formed, both representative and executive ones. Instead of the Kalmyk *Oblast's* Executive Committee belonging to the system of executive committees of local soviets and acting as a representative government organ in-between the sessions of soviets, two bodies were established: the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR (Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic), as the supreme government organ in-between the republican

congresses of the soviets; and the Soviet of People's Commissars, as the government of the Kalmyk ASSR accountable to the republican congress of soviets and to the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee was elected for organizing and carrying out practical activities of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR. In fact, it was the standing government organ in-between the sessions of the Central Executive Committee. This form of government (republican congress of Soviets, Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR and its Presidium) existed until the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR was adopted in 1937.

The first Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR was formed by the jubilee session of the Kalmyk *Oblast's* Executive Committee temporarily comprising 95 members and 33 member candidates, that is, it was composed of the former *oblast's* executive committee. The same day, the session of the Central Executive Committee elected V.A. Khomutnikov as the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR and G.I. Pakhomov as the Secretary of the Central Executive Committee, and formed the Presidium of the Central Executive Committee comprising eight members (V.A. Khomutnikov—Chairman, G.I. Pakhomov—Secretary, I.N. Karpov, A.P. Pyurveyev, B.M. Lyalin, S.U. Ubushiyeu, P.I. Timofeyev, and D.P. Pederov) and three candidates (N.I. Zimin, E.I. Tserenov, U.M. Mukookuyev), which in fact was a standing supreme government body of the republic (by its membership, it was a party and state apparatus because most of its members were members of the *Oblast* Committee's Bureau).

The first Kalmyk government—Soviet of People's Commissars—was formed on November 2, 1935 in accordance with the resolution taken by the session of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR. A.P. Pyurveyev was appointed as the Chairman of the republican government and A.N. Byrkin was appointed as the Vice-Chairman. The Sovnarkom of the Kalmyk ASSR also comprised People's Commissar for Agriculture S.U. Ubushiyeu, People's Commissar for Education B.L. Lidzhiyev, People's Commissar for Public Health U.D. Dushan, People's Commissar for Justice and Republican General Prosecutor P.Ya. Khonkhoshev, People's Commissar for Social Security I.I. Sharapov, People's Commissar for Finances B.M. Lyalin, People's Commissar for Local Industry E.-A.K. Kekeyev, head of the Internal Affairs Administration P.I. Timofeyev and plenipotentiary of the USSR People's Commissariat for Procurement (Sovnarkom of the Kalmyk ASSR) T.L. Moskaev.¹

Since republican congresses of Soviets were convened only from time to time, the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR was the standing supreme government body in the territory of the republic. Being a representative body, it was elected by the republican congress of soviets. The first republican congress of soviets was convened in early 1936 after elections to the village, municipal, settlement, and *ulus* soviets carried out in compliance with the 1925 Constitution of the RSFSR and old legislation on elections of congresses of soviets.

The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR and the republican election commission headed by D.P. Pyurveyev, Vice Chairman of the Kalmyk Central Executive Committee, was in charge of preparation for and conduction of the reporting and reelection campaign of soviets. A bit later (on January 2, 1936) V.A. Khomutnikov, Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR, was entrusted with control over the activities of the election commission of the Kalmyk ASSR. Election commissions acting under the auspices of executive committee chairmen were in charge of reelections in all of the village, settlement, municipal, and *ulus* soviets. The preparatory work was completed by the beginning of December 1935. The reelections were scheduled for December 5–14.

As many as 2,338 persons including 637 women (27.2%) and 792 party and Komsomol members (33.9%) became members of the village, settlement, and municipal soviets during the reelection campaign. The voter turnout for elections to the above-mentioned soviets amounted to 78% in December 1935, that is, less than for the previous elections by 14%. Corresponding *ulus* government organs—*ulus* congresses of soviets comprising 684 delegates—were formed at plenary sessions of the village and settlement soviets held in January and February 1936.

As many as 657 delegates (96%) took part in the *ulus* congresses of soviets held on February 10–18, 1936 including 155 women (23.6%), 452 Kalmyks (68.8%), 181 Russians (27.5%), and 369 party and Komsomol members (56.1%). Only 14 persons (2.1%) out of all *ulus* delegates had higher education, 81 persons (12.3%) had secondary education, and 454 delegates (69.1%) had elementary education; there were 108 illiterate delegates as well (16.4%). As many as 291 delegates (44.3%) were elected to *ulus* congresses of soviets for the first time.

The *ulus* congresses of soviets elected delegates for the First Republican Congress of Soviets from among their members and formed the supreme government body of the Kalmyk ASSR comprising 194 delegates (the actual number of the delegates that came to the session out of 226

persons). The resolution issued by the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR on February 2, 1936 stipulated for the following norms of *ulus* delegates for the republican congress of soviets: Zapadnyi *ulus*—29 delegates, Sarpinsky *ulus*—45 delegates, Tsentralnyi *ulus*—37 delegates, Privolzhsky *ulus*—24 delegates, Chernozemelsky *ulus*—13 delegates, Dolbansky *ulus*—25 delegates, and town of Elista—17 delegates.²

The First Republican Congress of Soviets was opened on February 20, 1936. The party faction of the congress formed all of its working committees (upon suggestion of the secretary of the Lagansky *Ulus* Executive Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) L.K. Kilganov), that is, the party took control over the congress' work. Chairman of the Sovnarkom of the RSFSR D.T. Sulimov and secretary of the Stalingrad *Kray* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) Goldin, as well as such delegates as I.M. Vareikis, secretary of the Territorial Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), S.M. Kuznetsov, Chairman of the Territorial Executive Committee, and O.I. Gorodovikov, corps commander and deputy commander-in-chief of the Central Asian Military District took part in the congress.

As many as 194 delegates (the turnout amounted to 85.8%) representing as little as 0.9% of the republic's voters participated in the congress of soviets. The congress membership was as follows: women—39 (20.1%), Kalmyks—126 (64.9%), Russians—59 (30.4%), members and member candidates of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)—113 (58.2%), VLKSM (Leninist Young Communist League of the Soviet Union) members—27 (13.9%), delegates with higher education—15 (7.7%), delegates with secondary education—27 (13.9%), delegates with elementary education—141 (72.6%), and illiterate delegates—11 (5.6%). As many as 88 persons (45.3%) were elected as delegates of the republican regional congress of soviets for the first time.

The Central Executive Committee comprising 101 persons was elected at the suggestion of the Communist faction on the concluding day of the First Republican Congress of Soviets on February 23, 1936. Corresponding *Ulus* Committees of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and the Bureau of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) examined all of the candidates in advance. As a result of open voting for the list of candidates, the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR comprising the above-said number of members was formed.³

Honorary members residing and working outside Kalmykia (I.M. Vareikis, O.I. Gorodovikov, and S.M. Kuznetsov) were elected to

the supreme government body of the republic for the first time. The honorary member institution became a regular practice since that time for forming higher government bodies in national republics. According to their official capacities, all members from bureaus of *oblast* committees and most members of *oblast* committees of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) formed a part of the Central Executive Committee. Thus, it is not accidental that Communists held a majority in the Central Executive Committee (62.4%); the share of Komsomol members was 6.9%. The share of female members of the Central Executive Committee remained the same as before (24.7%).

By that time, the educational level of the Central Executive Committee members of the Kalmyk ASSR changed noticeably: 15 members (14.9%) had higher education, 16 (15.8%)—secondary education, 67 (66.3%)—elementary education, and the number of illiterate persons decreased to 3 (3%). The membership of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR got renewed by 44.5% (45 persons were elected for the first time). According to the ethnic composition of the republic, Kalmyks had a lot of seats (70 persons, or 69.3%) in the Central Executive Committee, Russians had 26 seats (25.7%), and representatives from other peoples had 5 seats (4.9%).⁴

At its very first organizational session held on February 23, 1936, the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR formed its Presidium and government of the republic with the previous membership.⁵

The formation of the autonomous state caused the need to develop and adopt its Constitution. However, by the time when the Kalmyk ASSR was proclaimed, no draft Constitution was developed because the whole country was getting ready for adopting the new Constitution of the USSR, as well as constitutions of the USSR's autonomous republics.

The preparation for adopting constitutions of national states in compliance with the 1936 Constitution of the USSR began on the eve of the adoption of the USSR Constitution. On the whole, this preparation was completed in the USSR's autonomous republics by late 1937—early 1938. Before the new constitutional legislation was adopted, the legal status of the Kalmyk ASSR as a constituent member of the RSFSR was defined by the 1925 Constitution of the RSFSR, as well as other legislative acts of the RSFSR.

Based on principal provisions entitled *Declaration of Rights of the Working and Exploited People*, the 1925 Constitution of the RSFSR confirmed that the Russian Republic is built on the basis of the federation of national Soviet republics. According to the Constitution, it was impossible

to impose any restrictions or to prejudice the rights of national minorities, and acknowledged the "rights of certain peoples to separate themselves to autonomous Soviet socialist republics and regions based on resolutions adopted by their congresses of soviets and upon the approval of supreme authorities of the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic."

By preserving the major features of the RSFSR as a unitary state and even specifying them in a greater detail, it provided that constitutions of autonomous republics were to be finally approved by the All-Russian Congress of Soviets, and provisions of autonomous *oblasts*—by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee. Besides, supreme authorities of the RSFSR were entitled to cancel normative acts issued by supreme authorities of autonomous republics and *oblasts* if they were contradictory to the Constitution or legislation of the RSFSR. The 1925 Constitution of the RSFSR confirmed the unlimited nature of powers belonging to supreme authorities of the RSFSR, which was typical for a unitary state.

A new Chapter was introduced to the Constitution—it was entitled *On Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republics and Oblasts*, and it established a system of government authorities for autonomous republics and *oblasts*, the scope of their competence and powers. According to this Chapter, the lawmakers recognized autonomous *oblasts* as constituent members of the RSFSR, though Article 2 defined autonomous republics as federal constituent members only.

In November 1936, the Second Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR was convened to discuss the draft Constitution of the USSR and elections of delegates to the *Kray's* Second Congress, the 17th All-Russian Congress and 8th Extraordinary All-Russian Congress of Soviets. The Presidium of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR proceeded to the preparation for the 2nd Extraordinary Congress of Soviets and ordered by its resolution of September 8 that delegates to *ulus* congresses were to be elected at plenary sessions of village and settlement soviets and delegates to the extraordinary republican congress of soviets were to be elected at *ulus* congresses of soviets and at the plenary session of the municipal soviet. The same resolution defined the terms for plenary sessions of village soviets (October 5–15, 1936), *ulus* congresses of soviets, and the plenary session of the municipal soviet (November 1–5, 1936), as well as the Second Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR (November 10, 1936).

The Second Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the republic was opened on November 10, 1936. Upon suggestion of the congress party faction, its working committees (Presidium and Secretariat, as well as

Mandate and Drafting Committee) and Honorary Presidium comprising members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) were formed, and the agenda of its sessions (draft Constitution of the USSR; elections of delegates to the *Kray*'s Second Congress, 17th All-Russian Congress and 8th All-Russian Congress of Soviets; adoption of the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR) was approved. As many as 178 delegates (78.7%) out of 226 elected delegates came to the first session of the congress held on November 10–12, 1936.

After the discussion and adoption of a resolution on the draft USSR Constitution, representatives from the republic to the *Kray*'s (43 persons) as well as the All-Russian and All-Union Congresses of Soviets (I.N. Karpov and A.P. Pyurveyev to both congresses) were delegated. The party faction of the congress introduced all of the candidates, who were elected unanimously by open voting for the list. Thus, 178 members of the republican congress of soviets (0.2% of the total number of voters in the republic) elected two delegates from the republic to the forthcoming sessions of supreme government authorities of the RSFSR and USSR.

Due to preparing the draft Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR, the session of the Second Extraordinary Congress of Soviets was interrupted and scheduled for 1937. The congress was resumed on June 21, 1937 to discuss and adopt the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR. Out of 226 delegates elected in 1936, 207 delegates (91.6%) came to the second session of the extraordinary congress of soviets. In fact, 200 delegates took part in the congress because seven delegates (U.D. Dushan, E.Kh. Otkhonov, E.K. Kekeyev, M.B. Dedeyev, D.L. Normayev, S. Urlakov, and L. Mandzhiyev) were recognized as people's enemies and deprived of their delegate seats. Most delegates belonged to the Communist party (110 persons or 53.1%) and the Young Communist League (25 persons or 12%), and totaled 65.1%. In accordance with the ethnic composition ratio in the republic (66% of Kalmyks and 22% of Russians), 139 Kalmyks (67%) and 59 Russians (28.5%) were elected as delegates and came to the congress. There were 40 women (19.3%), 66 persons elected for the first time (32%), and 15 persons (7.2%) decorated with orders among the delegates.

In spite of the party's conclusion on the complete victory of socialism, as well as great success achieved in the culture and education in national *oblasts*, the education level of the republican population mismatched the conclusion. Delegates of the extraordinary congress of soviets still comprised a lot of semiliterate (67.1%) and illiterate (6.3%) persons; there

were only 17 persons with higher education (8.1%) and 38 persons with secondary education (18.3%).

By adopting the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR in compliance with the 1936 Constitution of the USSR, the Second Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the Republic completed one of the stages in the development of the Soviet state and socialist democracy, which was identified as the dictatorship of the proletariat. The practice of election campaigns and formation of state authorities of all levels confirms that the Soviet democracy was restricted by strict control of the ruling Communist Party.

New Constitutions of the USSR, the RSFSR, and the Kalmyk ASSR introduced fundamental changes in the political foundations of Soviet statehood, as well as electoral and constitutional rights. Having come to a conclusion about the liquidation of capitalist forms of economy and exploitative classes, the Communist Party secured the transformation of the proletarian democracy into the national one, as well as expansion of the social base for representative authorities in its Constitution. In this connection, soviets of workers', peasants', and Red Army delegates were transformed into soviets of workers', delegates.

In January 1937, the new Constitution of the RSFSR was adopted to list specifically all constituent members of the Russian Federative Republic—*krais*, *oblasts*, autonomous republics, and autonomous *oblasts*. It defined 47 constituent members altogether including 17 autonomous republics and six autonomous *oblasts*. Though preserving the previous provision about the adoption of constitutions of autonomous republics, it introduced an additional clause—about the approval of borders and district division in autonomous republics and autonomous *oblasts*.

A special article (Article 20) devoted to constitutions of autonomous republics legislated chairmen of presidiums of Supreme Soviets in autonomous republics as vice-chairmen of the Presidium of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet. The new Constitution advanced the status of autonomous republics as constituent members of the RSFSR, yet at the same time it legalized principles of the unitary state building by preserving the vertical of power and subordination of authorities according to the hierarchy (with inspections of inferior bodies and suspension of their acts).

The first Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR was developed and adopted in June 1937 in accordance with the basic principles of the 1936 Constitution of the USSR and the 1937 Constitution of the RSFSR. According to various historical sources, this caused real joy and enthusiasm among the republican population. The Kalmyk people considered this fact to be the greatest historic event. The Constitution of the Republic seemed

to embody national statehood, the achievements and prospects of democracy, justice and equality. In fact, it was such by its general nature and content.

Unfortunately, one very small document (yet a deep one by its meaning), which is kept in the republican archives, can shed light on many aspects of those times and so-called socialist democracy. All this is confirmed by the contents of this very document, which was drawn up simultaneously with the development and adoption of the 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR. This small telegram from the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR sent on June 5, 1937 to the All-Russian Central Executive Committee reads as follows: "The extraordinary congress of soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR will open on June 20 to adopt the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR. Thus, the draft Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR has been published for discussions.

When getting ready for the congress, we faced the following problem that was not clear to us: the draft of our Constitution was examined and approved by legislative bodies in the present redaction. Perhaps, amendments or changes (though not substantial) changing the approved text will be made during the draft discussion in the press or at the congress. Please clarify this issue for us. Deputy Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR Pyurveyev."⁶

This text needs no comments. The approval of the Constitution of the autonomous republic by the supreme organ of the RSFSR before its approval by the republic is a flagrant violation of constitutional principles of the country's national and state system.

The republican Constitution proclaimed the Kalmyk ASSR to be a socialist state of workers and peasants with soviets of workers' delegates elected directly by the population having full power. The USSR Constitution provision that soviets were improved and strengthened due to the dictatorship of the proletariat reproduced by constitutions of USSR and autonomous republics specified the political foundation of the state. Soviets of workers', peasants', and Red Army delegates (in Kalmykia—soviets of working Kalmyk people), which, in fact, reflected the nature of class representation organs, were transformed into soviets of workers' delegates. According to lawmakers, they reflected the social status of the Soviet state more precisely. That is why the political foundation of the Kalmyk ASSR as a socialist state obtained a name of the same type—soviets of workers' delegates.

The 1937 RSFSR Constitution, unlike the previous ones, defined the principles of relations between the Kalmyk ASSR and supreme govern-

ment bodies of the RSFSR, as well as principles of representation of autonomous republics in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, as well as Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. Article 31 of the RSFSR Constitution reads as follows: "The Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR elects the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR comprising: Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, 17 deputy chairmen according to the number of autonomous republics, Secretary of the Presidium and 20 Presidium members." The RSFSR Constitution legalized the new system of supreme government bodies in autonomous republics that was basically similar to the system of supreme government bodies in USSR republics. Based on the provision, the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution defined in detail that "the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR is the supreme government body of the Kalmyk Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic" to be elected by citizens of the republic aged 18 and over by the date of elections (Articles 19 and 102).

The Kalmyk ASSR Constitution legalized the new public and state system of Kalmykia, stipulated the new system of its government bodies, defined principles of their organization and activities as well as basic rights and obligations of citizens in the republic and guaranteed a more democratic electoral system than before.

According to the 1936 USSR Constitution, the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution introduced universal suffrage. It meant that all citizens of the republic aged 18 and over were entitled to take part in elections of members and be elected, regardless of their race, nationality, confession, educational qualification, habitancy, social background, property status or past activities, except for mentally ill people and convicts deprived of their electoral rights. Since universal suffrage was secured by the Constitution, some categories of citizens regained their voting rights and right to be elected to people's representation bodies.

According to the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution (Article 103), elections were to be not only universal but also equal. Each citizen had one vote and all citizens were entitled to vote on an equal basis. This provision lifted the inequality of electoral rights between workers and peasants at elections of members to congresses of soviets. In addition, the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution liquidated multi-stage elections and instituted direct elections to all of the representative organs. The Constitution provided that (according to this principle) citizens were to elect delegates to all workers' soviets—from *khoton* (village) and municipal soviets of workers' delegates to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR—by direct elections (Article 106).

Democratization of the electoral procedure also involved the replacement of open voting with a secret one. As was mentioned above, voting for delegates to village soviets at meetings and plenary sessions of village soviets was open and was conducted by lifting hands and for the list of candidate members. According to the new provision, voters were to vote alone, in the polling booth and using ballot boxes. Now we will examine how the democratic principles of electoral rights were implemented in practice and what role the constitutional provision (saying that the Communist Party was the leading core for all workers' organizations including public and state organizations) played in this process (Article 93).

Whatever the Constitution might say, it legalized the new public and state system of Kalmykia, stipulated the new system of its government bodies, defined principles of their organization and activities, as well as basic rights and obligations of citizens in the republic, and provided a more democratic electoral system than before.

It should be noted that the Kalmyk ASSR as an autonomous state was not a part of any administrative or territorial entity. According to Article 14 of the RSFSR Constitution, it was a part of the Russian Federation and its state power was based on autonomous principles.

This provision defined the principles of relations between autonomous republics and supreme government bodies of the RSFSR, as well as principles of representation of autonomous republics in the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, as well as the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.

The 1937 RSFSR Constitution legalized the new system of supreme government bodies in autonomous republics that was basically similar to the system of supreme government bodies in USSR republics. When the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution was approved in 1937, republican congresses of Soviets and Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR (supreme government bodies of the republic) were liquidated. According to Articles 56–64 of the 1937 RSFSR Constitution, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR elected for four-year terms became the supreme government organ in the republic, and Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was the supreme government organ in-between its sessions.

The 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR (Articles 22 and 50) defined terms of powers for members of the Supreme Soviet and local soviets of the republic. They were elected for four and two years, respectively. As for their membership and terms of powers, the Supreme Soviet and local soviets of the republic were standing governmental organs unlike the republican and *ulus* congresses of soviets.

According to the 1937 Constitution of the republic, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was to be elected by Kalmyk citizens aged 18 or over by the election date and based on the universal, equal, and direct electoral right by secret voting. According to Article 22 of the 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was elected by electoral districts, which were organized in compliance with the new provision, and only based on the territorial principle (one member representing three thousand persons).

When the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution was adopted, substantial changes took place in the administrative and territorial division of the republic. After the subdivision of *uluses* (order issued by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee on January 24, 1938) there were 13 *uluses* in the Kalmyk ASSR (Dolbansky: 13 village soviets, Lagansky: 8 village soviets, Privolzhsky: 7 village soviets, Zapadnyi: 6 village soviets, Ulan-Kholsky: 7 village soviets, Yashaltinsky: 11 village soviets, Maloderbetovskiy: 9 village soviets, Sarpinsky: 9 village soviets, Ketchenerovskiy: 7 village soviets, Yustinsky: 7 village soviets, Chernozemelsky: 7 village soviets, Troitsky: 8 village soviets, and Priyutnensky: 10 village soviets), 109 village soviets, one town of republican subordination, and one workers' settlement.⁷

The Kalmyk ASSR Constitution preserved the previous supreme republican government body (Soviet of People's Commissars) but its legal status was changed substantially. The Constitution defined the position of the Sovnarkom of the Kalmyk ASSR as an executive and regulatory organ as a part of the republican government system and delimited the competence and standard-making procedure for the bodies more exactly. As a body of general competence, the republican government (Sovnarkom) had broad powers for managing the economic, social, and cultural development, and for joining together and controlling all branches and units of the administration apparatus subordinate to it. Articles 38–48 of the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution, which virtually matched Articles 64–72 of the RSFSR Constitution, regulated such issues in full.

A separate chapter (Chapter 6) stipulated the budget-related rights of the republic and defined the key sources of the budgetary revenues. It provided that the government was in charge of the budgeting process and the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was to adopt the budget.

A common court system based on the administrative and territorial division was established both in the republic and the entire Soviet Union, and the people's court was its primary branch. *Ulus* residents elected it for a three-year term on the basis of the universal direct and equal electoral

right by secret voting (Article 77). The supreme judicial organ of the republic—Supreme Court elected by the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR for five-year terms—supervised over activities of judicial organs. The Constitution provided for legal proceedings to be in the Russian and Kalmyk languages.

According to the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution, the USSR Public Prosecutor supervised over compliance with socialist laws by all government authorities and enterprises subordinated to them, as well as officials and citizens in its territory either directly or by means of the RSFSR and Kalmyk ASSR Public Prosecutors.

The new constitutional law was passed during Stalin's era that featured mass repressions of Soviet people. Constitutional rights were merely a facade. When reading the articles and chapters on people's rights, in fact, it may seem that all USSR and Kalmyk citizens had democratic rights and political liberties, and their personal immunity, inviolability of residence, etc. were secured. The Constitution reflected the progress achieved in the field of the national issue and put the principles of equal rights as the legal base. In spite of this, all of the constitutional provisions remained on paper only and did not prevent authorities from sending people to concentration camps, shooting them and repressing entire peoples. This confirms that there was a constitution but no constitutional system.

Though the constitutional legislation missed any provisions related to the repressive policy pursued by the Soviet state, constitutions of autonomous republics reflected a special position of internal affairs bodies. Article 64 of the 1937 Kalmyk ASSR Constitution made an exception saying that internal affairs bodies in *uluses* were to be formed by the republican Internal Affairs People's Commissariat and approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. It is clear that the internal affairs department had a special status unlike the rest of departments in *ulus* executive committees, which were formed by sessions of *ulus* soviets. Therefore, it is not accidental that the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR applied to the USSR's People's Commissar for Internal Affairs and General Commissar for State Security N.I. Yezhov in writing on July 28, 1937 asking for his order to organize the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD) of the Kalmyk ASSR⁸ in spite of the fact that, according to the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution, it was the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR that had the competence to form departmental government bodies of the republic.

In spite of its declarative nature, the 1937 Kalmyk ASSR Constitution legalized a higher degree of the national statehood and legal status of the Kal-

myk ASSR as a constituent member of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic. It served as a legal base for developing the legislation of the autonomous republic and organizing the activities of its governing bodies.

The socialist economy system and socialist property in its both forms—state and cooperative and *kolkhoz* property—laid the economic foundation for the national statehood of Kalmykia. By 1937, as many as 149 *kolkhozes* joining together 46,398 peasant households (95.5%) and 16 *sovkhoses* with 99% of the republican cattle stock and 98.4% of planted areas were organized. However, the prevalent pattern of ownership was the socialist one with cattle breeding as its key industry. It was developing very slowly and failed to reach the level of 1928 (the pre-collectivization year) by 1937. In 1937, the cattle stock in the republic amounted to 917,600 head (including 879,100 head of productive cattle), which was by 26% less than in 1928 (with the total cattle stock of 1,238,754 head including 1,209,710 head of productive cattle).

By 1937, the cattle stock (with the productive cattle stock equal to 72.2 million head) in the RSFSR was reduced by 34.6% as compared to in 1928.⁹

In spite of the slow reconstruction of the public cattle stock, procurement plans related to cattle breeding products increased each year. While the total cattle stock in Kalmykia increased by 25% from 1933 to 1937, the meat procurement plan doubled (from 42,219 to 86,489 *centners*), the butter procurement plan almost tripled (from 2,846 to 7,567 *centners*), and the wool procurement plan almost tripled (from 9,630 to 26,206 *centners*) during the same period.¹⁰

The planted areas in *kolkhozes* and *sovkhoses* substantially increased for three years (from 73,749 to 167,697 hectares including grain crops by 82%) and their material and technical basis improved a bit. In spite of the increase in the vehicle fleet up to 662 tractors and 119 combine harvesters, *kolkhozes* and *sovkhoses* remained low-powered: on average, four tractors (15 h.p. each) and less than one combine harvester fell on one *kolkhoz* or *sovkhaz*. The grain crop yield was low and was basically as follows: winter rye—2.7 *centners* (up to 6 *centners* during fruitful years), winter wheat—3.7 *centners* (up to 9–10 *centners* during fruitful years), spring wheat—3 *centners* (up to 9 *centners* during fruitful years) and barley—5.8 *centners* (up to 10 *centners* during fruitful years). At the same time, grain procurement plans were increasing from year to year. While in 1933 Kalmykia procured 9.7 thousand tons of grain, it procured up to 13–15 thousand tons of grain each year for the following four years.¹¹

Due to the expansion of arable farming and melon growing, introduction of forage crops, and course to extensive sheep breeding, the

intensive reclamation of Kalmyk steppes was launched. The USSR state plan of cattle breeding development paid much attention to reclaiming the Black Lands in the south of Kalmykia (with the territory of 1,174 thousand hectares). The Soviet government ascribed the status of national significance to the Black Lands and transformed them from seasonal winter pasture grounds into "the stationary pasture ground for socialist cattle breeding" for Kalmykia and neighboring *krais*, *oblasts*, and republics (the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Dagestan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic, the Stavropol *Kray*, as well as the Rostov, Stalingrad, and Astrakhan *oblasts*). Such management methods resulted in the degradation of the Black Lands and formation of the first man-made desert in Europe, which was characterized by bodies of open and running sands.

Irrigated agriculture was also developing during that period. The total irrigated territory amounted to 5,000 hectares including 1,617 hectares under cotton in 1937 (by 7.2 times more than in 1930).

The Kalmyk industry was developing at a slow rate. It included six brick factories, eight print shops and three steam mills with the daily milling rate of 740 *centners* in 1937. The power base was not developed except for low-power diesel stations in some of the republican *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes*. More attention was paid to developing the fishing industry. There were nine fish processing plants in Kalmykia in 1937, including four floating ones, one fish canning plant, and the Lagansky Fish Canning Plant yielding 14 million cans per year.

Transportation and roads remained a challenge as yet. Cargo from the closest railway stations (60–100 km) was mainly delivered by animal-drawn transport. The share of motor transportation was 40–45% and the vehicle fleet was gradually growing (there were 815 cars in the republic in 1937). Bus passenger transportation was organized between Elista and some *ulus* centers (Maloderbety and Bashanta) as well as from Elista to Stalingrad (300 km). Because of the lack of funding and mechanisms, road building was at an incipient stage. That is why the roads were mainly earth but graded.

The length of telegraph and telephone lines grew from 250 km (1920) to 4,524 km (1937) in 17 years. All of the *ulus* centers and 68% of village soviets had telephone communication with the capital of the republic. By the end of 1937, there were 548 phone numbers (almost one phone number per center). However, if we take into consideration the fact that most telephones were concentrated in republican institutions, hardly any telephones were installed in centers of population.

We should say without any bias that by the middle of the 1930s quite notable progress was achieved in the field of the educational and cultural development of Kalmyk people. After the first stage of the cultural revolution, the literacy rate among the population amounted to 80% by 1935. Universal elementary education was introduced in 1930 and there were 203 elementary, 32 post-elementary, and seven secondary schools in the republic, where 31,389 pupils including 15,496 pupils in elementary and 4,517 pupils in secondary schools were studying. Almost all children of school age attended schools. Moreover, 11,699 adults went to schools for illiterate people and 13,945 adults went to schools for semi-illiterate people. There were 896 teachers including 460 Kalmyks (51.3%) in republican schools. Most of the teachers had secondary pedagogic education and teachers without specialized education were undergoing special training at correspondence pedagogic schools (218 teachers) and higher education institutions (150 teachers).

Much attention was paid to training personnel for all branches of the republican people's economy. There were 885 students of secondary specialized education establishments (agricultural, veterinary, zootechnical, as well as two pedagogical schools) in the 1937/38 academic year, and there were 300 students in higher education institutions in the country. The pre-school education system was also formed during these years. In 1937, there were 7,300 children in 27 kindergartens.¹²

Party organizations paid special attention to ideological and propagandistic work, as well as cultural and educational services for the population. Special institutions were established for these years. In 1938, there were 104 village reading rooms, 33 libraries, five houses of culture, eight stationary cinema halls, and 14 portable projectors in the republic. The children's music school, the state Kalmyk theater, the national choir and orchestra of folk instruments were opened, and various amateur clubs (drama, choir, folk instruments, etc.) began working in 1936–1938.¹³

Health care was an essential social problem in Kalmykia of that time. It should be noted that no medical aid was rendered in an organized way until Soviet power came to the republic. Whereas there were only six small district hospitals with 89 beds in the Kalmyk steppe before 1917, as early as in 1937 there were already 28 hospitals with 550 beds, 21 ambulance stations, nine different dispensaries, and 25 nurseries for 848 children. In 1937, there were 79 doctors including 15 Kalmyks and 240 paramedics, including 46 Kalmyks working in health care institutions in the republic.¹⁴ Of course, the needs of 195,000 persons residing in the republic could not be satisfied in full by the available cultural, educational, and

health care institutions. However, if we compare this to the situation observed before the October Revolution, we can see substantial progress in this sphere in the middle of the 1930s. The increased volume of financing provided for these fields confirms the priority of social and cultural problems, as well as health care and education problems. The volume of financing for social and cultural needs in the budget of the republic grew from 39% in 1928 up to 66.5% in 1937.¹⁵

The flow of representatives of different peoples residing in the country grew along with the development of various branches of economy, as well as social and cultural infrastructure in the 1930s. The population of the republic increased by 24,723 persons by 1937 as compared to 1929 (mainly due to the flow of arriving Russians—18,226 persons) and made up 194,453 persons. However, the number of Kalmyks in the republic decreased by 16% during the same period (from 70% to 54%), or by 13,468 Kalmyks (there were 105,146 Kalmyks residing in the republic in 1937). Even if we assume that the absolute decrease in the number of Kalmyks was caused by their outflow and migration to other regions of the country, the number of Kalmyks residing beyond the republic in 1937 (24,190 persons) did not grow and remained at the previous level of 1926 (22,265 persons). So we can ask: where were 13,468 Kalmyks then? Even if we omit the natural growth of the population. (Calculated by the author.)

The major reason for such a decrease in the number of Kalmyks in the republic in 1929–1937 was dispossession and large-scale repressions during that period. The most hard-working peasants, skilled and business-like executives, gifted and competent managers, bright and talented personalities were destroyed or placed in prisons or concentration camps. In fact, not only their well-being or social origin but also their education, training, and profession were major factors for accusation to define the fate of arrested people. According to my calculations, 23 people's commissars and chairmen of district executive committees of the republic were arrested and sentenced to be shot or to long-term hard labor by the triumvirate for a short period of time (for three or four months) in 1937. The repressed people were not only Kalmyks but also representatives of other peoples.

The multinational composition and federative nature of the Soviet state was reflected (though just formally) in the structure of its supreme authority—the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, which was made up of two chambers enjoying equal rights—Soviet of the Union and Soviet of Nationalities. The Soviet of Nationalities was elected by people from the USSR and autonomous republics as well as autonomous *oblasts* and national districts

regardless of the number of residents and based on the norm of 25 members per USSR republic, 11 members per autonomous republic, five members per autonomous *oblast*, and one member per national district.

The first election for state authorities held in the territory of the Kalmyk ASSR in compliance with the new Constitution of the USSR and Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR was election of members for both chambers of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR—Soviet of the Union and Soviet of Nationalities—from the Kalmyk USSR, which was held in December 1937.

According to the 1936 Constitution of the USSR, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was a supreme body for people's representation in the USSR. Therefore, it was made up of delegates elected by the population in a way similar to all soviets of workers' delegates. Members of the Soviet of the Union were elected in the entire territory of the USSR based on the principle of equal representation for the whole population of the country and based on the common norm—one member per 300,000 persons.

The 1936 Constitution of the USSR stipulated that the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was to be elected for a four-year term and that the procedure for holding the election was to be defined by the Regulations on Elections to be approved by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. In accordance with the Constitution of the USSR, election for the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was held by election districts formed by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR.

The following persons were elected as delegates from the Kalmyk ASSR in December 1937: for the Soviet of Nationalities (Supreme Soviet of the USSR)—M.N. Arkhakov, N.L. Garyayev, B.Sh. Dordzhiyev, L.K. Kilganov, B.T. Mandzhiyeva, O.N. Nardayev, P.G. Ozerkin, G.E. Ochirov, V.V. Pushkin, N.I. Surikov, V.A. Khomutnikov; for the Soviet of the USSR (Supreme Soviet of the USSR)—I.N. Karpov; for the Soviet of Nationalities from the RSFSR in the Rostov *oblast* and Kalmyk USSR—N.A. Izotov. Twelve members of the Supreme Soviet of the first convocation comprised five members (41.6%) of the bureau of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee—All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)—yet they comprised no workers or intelligentsia.

After convening and holding the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR as well as after forming the supreme and central state authorities of the USSR according to the USSR Constitution, the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) began forming the supreme state authorities and authorities of USSR and autonomous republics. On April 8, 1938 the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) adopted a special resolution entitled *On*

Preparation for the Forthcoming Election for the Supreme Soviets of USSR and Autonomous Republics. The Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) fixed the date of election for the Supreme Soviets of USSR and autonomous republics (June 12 or 26, 1938) and allowed the republics to define the exact date on their own. It was planned to be announced on June 26, 1938 as a day-off in those republics that chose to hold the election on this day.

According to the RSFSR Constitution and Kalmyk ASSR Constitution, the first election for the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was held on June 26, 1938. As many as 65 members were elected for the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR in 65 election districts.

The supreme authority of the republic was mainly made up of chiefs of republican party and Soviet enterprises. Only 17 members (26.1%) were engaged in the production field; the rest of 48 members (73.9%) were engaged in management activities (secretaries, heads of departments from *oblast* committees of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), secretaries of *ulus* party committees and secretary of the VLKSM *oblast* committee—a total of 15 persons, chairman of the Sovnarkom, people's commissars, military commissar, prosecutor, chairmen of committees of the Central Executive Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR, chairmen of *ulus* executive committees—21 people, etc.). Thus, the party structure of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR differed greatly from that of previous representative bodies of the *oblast* and republic. While the share of party members among the delegates of the Second Extraordinary Congress of Soviets of the republic was 53.1%, in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of the first convocation Communists had 50 seats (76.9%) out of 65 ones, Komsomol members 4 seats (6.2%), and non-party people only 11 seats (16.9%).

As a result of the purposeful policy pursued by party bodies, the social and national structure of membership for the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of the first convocation was formed and complied with the social and national structure of the republican population. In 1938, 41 Kalmyks (63%) and 22 Russians (33.8%) were elected for the Supreme Soviet of the republic. The educational level of members of the republican representative and legislative body was somewhat higher: six persons (9.7%) had higher education and 11 persons (16.9%) had secondary education. Most delegates were not literate enough: 48 persons (73.8%) had elementary education only.¹⁶

For the first time in Soviet history high-ranking state officials—members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-

Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and USSR government—were elected as honorary delegates of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. Such public “confidence and respect” to members of the Political Bureau and Josef Stalin was an obligate phenomenon of the personality cult period.

According to Article 22 of the 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR, members of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (first convocation) were to be elected for a four-year term. That is why the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was a permanent government authority by its membership and term of powers unlike the republican congress of soviets. To hold the sessions, the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (first convocation) elected I.M. Badmayev—secretary of the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks)—as the Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, as well as elected Presidium of the Supreme Soviet comprising a chairman, two vice-chairmen, secretary, seven members, as well as a republican government comprising a chairman and two vice-chairmen, chairman of the state Planning Committee, ten people's commissars, two department heads, and a plenipotentiary of the People's Commissariat for Procurement of the USSR as a part of the Sovnarkom of the Kalmyk ASSR on July 12, 1938.

Delegate of the republican Supreme Soviet and delegate of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR (elected on June 26, 1938) D.P. Pyurveyev, who headed the department for leading party bodies of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), was elected as the Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR; delegate D.B. Badmayev, who used to be the secretary of the Troitsk *ulus* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), became the secretary; delegate of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and delegate of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR N.L. Garyayev was elected as the Chairman of the republican Sovnarkom.

As a representative and legislative organ, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR performed its functions on a periodical basis at sessions convened twice a year. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet was a standing organ working in-between the sessions, and was in charge of specific issues related to its scope of competence only.

If we consider the practice adopted for forming the Supreme Soviet, its Presidium and Sovnarkom, as well as their party composition, organization, and lines of their activities, it will become clear that they belonged to state authorities only formally and were actually party and state authorities. Delegates of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR belonging to

the Communist Party (77%) formed a party group that was meant as an instrument of party control over the activities of the supreme republican organ.

The Bureau of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) was preliminarily examining all of the issues related to preparing and holding the sessions, defined the key lines of activities of the Supreme Soviet and formed its leading organs in advance. At the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, the entire Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and Sovnarkom, as well as their chairmen, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR and people's commissars of the republic were elected upon suggestion of the party group forming a part of the Supreme Soviet. The Bureau of the *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) considered and recommended all of the candidates preliminarily. Up to five or six members of the Bureau of the *Oblast* Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) formed a part of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR by their official status, which ensured the full party control over the body; that is, in fact, it was another bureau of the *oblast* party committee in the form of a state organ.

According to the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR, people's courts rendered justice in the republic. However, the Constitution also provided that special courts might be formed. Thereby, the Constitution legalized special repressive organs—"triumvirates"—acting in the republic, town, and all districts. The Supreme Court of the Kalmyk ASSR forming a part of the common judicial system of the country was the supreme republican legal agency. The Supreme Soviet of the republic elected it for a five-year term. The Supreme Court of the republic comprising a chairman and seven members was elected at the second session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (first convocation) in August 1939. The same session approved 75 people's assessors.

The same year district people's courts were elected for a three-year term by residents of the *oblast* on the basis of the universal, direct, and equal electoral right by secret voting.

The USSR Public Prosecutor supervised over compliance with legislation by all government authorities and enterprises, as well as individual officials and citizens in its republican territory either directly or by means of the RSFSR and Kalmyk ASSR Public Prosecutors. The USSR Public Prosecutor appointed the Kalmyk ASSR Public Prosecutor for a five-year term; the RSFSR Public Prosecutor appointed district and municipal Pub-

lic Prosecutors for a five-year term with the approval of the USSR Public Prosecutor to follow.

The Constitution provided that judges and prosecutors were independent and obeyed the law only. However, in fact they were under control of party organs and followed all of its directives and instructions religiously. Judges and prosecutors were mainly members of the party and, in compliance with the party discipline, obeyed the party bodies, which had special units controlling and supervising over judicial and law enforcement organs as well as public prosecutor's offices.

According to the country's constitutional legislation, the 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR established a new system of local government represented by *ulus*, municipal, settlement, *khoton*, village, and rural soviets of workers' delegates (even though the latter were absent). Lawmakers failed to define the terms of their reference either deliberately or accidentally.

In December 1939 local government bodies were formed in the republic. The election became the final stage of establishing all government bodies of the Kalmyk ASSR in compliance with the RSFSR Constitution and 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR. As many as 13 district (*ulus*) soviets, one municipal, three settlement, and 121 village soviets of workers' delegates were elected in the Kalmyk ASSR.

In December 1939 as many as 2,168 delegates were elected to local soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR for a two-year term including 325 delegates of *ulus* soviets, 50 delegates of the municipal soviet, 168 delegates of settlement soviets, and 1,625 delegates of village soviets. The party majority was secured both in local soviets and other authorities: Communists and Kom-somol members made up 62.7%. The share of party members was especially high in *ulus* soviets (73.9%); the share of party members in village soviets was the least one (59.3%). Men dominated in local soviets by the number of seats (64%). As compared to the local soviets elected at the previous election, the share of women grew from 27.2% to 36%.

The educational level of members of the republican local soviets remained very low. At the same time, they did not differ from local soviets in other regions by this index. As many as 82% of delegates as well as 92.1% of delegates from village soviets, 75.6% of delegates from settlement soviets, and 71.1% of delegates from *ulus* soviets had elementary education. The low representation of the working class (7.7%) in the composition of delegates in local soviets showed the absence of industrial production and prevalence of agriculture (peasants made up 55.5% of the total number of delegates).¹⁷

The ethnic composition (72% of Kalmyks) reflected the actual ratio of peoples and ethnic groups residing in Kalmykia in the late 1930s. The key features and criteria characterizing the qualitative composition of the political foundation of the Kalmyk national statehood for the first years of its formation mainly matched the federal ones (but most probably they were adapted to the average indices).

The Kalmyk people could see the legitimacy of the Soviet system and progressive advance of the society through the current process of the national and state building, as well as economic and cultural development.

Almost all Kalmyk people were converted to the settled way of life by the late 1930s. Centers of population were built, the capital was improved, education establishments (301 schools were functioning in the 1940/1941 academic year where 42,708 pupils were studying, that is, all children of school age went to school), and cultural and health care institutions were opened (stationary hospitals, polyclinics, paramedic stations, etc.), and illiteracy among the adult population was liquidated. That is why most people from the republic considered their way of life to be right and as an achievement of the new power in spite of such shortcomings as housing shortages, primitive households, still persisting social diseases, poverty, and low levels of literacy.

The equal property status of republican residents (a definite number of cattle and buildings per family in the countryside, almost equal salaries in village and urban intelligentsia and officials except for high-ranking ones and labor-day units in *kolkhozes*), as well as social guarantees and general progress in the social sphere (accessible and free education and health care, practically free housing, annual paid leaves, social insurance, etc.) contributed to the development of practically equal living standards among the population, and most people liked it.

The new economy was being established by immense labor, with great effort and expenses. Along with cattle breeding, agriculture as well as the material and technical bases of the agricultural sector were developing. Industry, communication, transportation, and road construction were emerging in the republic. At the same time, the Kalmyk economy was weak, as its key branch, cattle breeding, was managed by using the extensive method. There were less than eight low-powered tractors (15 h.p.), two cars, and two combine harvesters on average per farm (either collectivized or state one) in 1940.¹⁸ Small brick works and print shops, as well as fish processing enterprises, represented the Kalmyk industry. However, taking into account the fact that there were no enterprises of this type at all before the Soviets came to power, most of the residents took such eco-

nomie situation as a great progress. At the same time, it is clear that people appreciated full employment and respect paid to working people (their labor achievements), as well as their material and moral stimulation (including even government awards).

The state guaranteed the rights and freedoms to all citizens of the Soviet Union by law including the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR (in fact, they were not observed and were even vulgarly violated, in particular, during the period of the personality cult under the pretext of crafty designs of numerous enemies, both foreign and internal ones, who were impeding the building of the society of happiness and well-being), and most people sincerely conceived them as real, great progress.

Representatives of the working class could be elected and could take part (though theoretically) in the activities of republican, USSR, and RSFSR governing bodies during that period. Moreover, representatives of working people and indigenous population could be found among heads of state, party and economic authorities, and became scientists, writers, commanders, doctors, teachers, famous actors, or painters. While Kalmyks as representatives of the non-Russian population were actually deprived of such possibilities before the 1917 October Revolution, it is quite natural that national masses took their new position in the political life of the society quite positively.

Kalmyks were also positive about the military draft renewal in 1926–1927. The draft was suspended in the early 1920s due to economic problems in the *oblast*. As many as 3,633 persons including 1,980 Kalmyks were drafted in 1936 and 2,998 persons were drafted in 1939.¹⁹

Under conditions of the anti-war propaganda carried out on an active basis in compliance with the party instructions, the Kalmyk party organization, governed by resolutions taken by the January plenary session (1938) of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), proceeded to recruit new members after the mass annihilation and purge of party members in 1936–1937. While only 50 persons including 20 candidates became party members in Kalmykia in 1937, in 1938 as many as 953 persons joined the party, that is, 19 times more than a year before (13 times more persons joined the party in the whole country). The republican party organization grew from 2,209 persons in 1938 to 5,574 persons in 1941, that is, by 2.5 times (2 times the rate in the entire country for the same period).²⁰

One cannot agree with the conclusion reached by the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) in 1940 that the increase in the party recruitment rates “is a proof of further intensifica-

tion of bonds between the Kalmyk party organization and people's masses of the republic" when people joined the party based on the plan, allotment, and quotas. Most of the new party members (over 50%) were officials whose careers depended on their party membership. The rest of new members belonged to workers and *kolkhoz* members (up to 80% of semi-literate and illiterate people among them), who joined the party on the basis of their social status. As of January 1, 1941, there were 40.48% of semi-literate and 1.56% of illiterate Communists in the Kalmyk party organization.

In this connection, it is very difficult to speak about the vanguard role and exceptional authority of the Kalmyk party organization. Another matter is that the group of people forming the party was ideologized and politically loaded, and discipline in this group was based on the party principle of democratic centralism. That is why the Communist Party was gradually coalescing with state authorities (up to their substitution), expanding and consolidating its professional and staff apparatus to implement its agitation, propagandizing, and organizing role.

In the years 1939–1940 the apparatus of the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) was expanded substantially: the party propaganda and agitation department was reorganized, the departments for press and publishers were reorganized to form a single department for propaganda and agitation, and a new department—military—was established. The staff of the propaganda and agitation department was increased from three to 12 persons and a group of six lecturers was formed. The propagandist staff in the municipal and district party committees was increased from 19 to 61 persons, that is, by almost four times in the entire republic. In compliance with the resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), measures aimed at advanced training of department heads and secretaries for ideology from *ulus* committees in different higher military schools of the country were taken at the same time.²¹

Due to the fact that the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee needed to manage and organize military training of the population, military departments were formed as a part of Soviet authorities (in the republican Sovnarkom as well as municipal and district executive committees) at the same time and were to deal with this issue. To improve the efficacy of such activities and intensify its control over them, the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee made certain changes in the structure of public defense organizations (a political department was formed as a part of the *oblast* council of the Society for Assistance to Army, Aviation and Fleet—Osoaviakhim) and sent party personnel to assist them in the early 1940s.

Military training for the population and defense measures in the republic belonged to permanent items on the agenda of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee beginning with the early 1940s. The report delivered by the secretary of the *oblast* party committee at a Kalmykian party session in March 1940 read as follows: "The Soviet nation must be in the state of mobilization readiness so that no 'accidents' or schemes devised by our external enemies could take us by surprise." The Kalmyk *oblast* party committee operating with different and great figures was sure that it coped successfully with the problem of fundamental reconstruction of all units in the defense system. According to its report, over 35 thousand persons (almost a quarter of the adult population) were trained at different defense associations in 1940 where they mastered all kinds of military and war craft. The fact that the 17th *Oblast* Party Conference raised the question of developing skiing in the republic (though no skis were available and Kalmyks had no idea of this sport) confirms that the approach to the military training for the population was formal.

The resolution about skiing training adopted by the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) discloses not only the formal approach of party organs to solving many problems but also the malpractice related to conducting general campaigns without taking into consideration local opinions, conditions, and features and based on harsh party discipline on the basis of democratic centralism principles, which developed during the Soviet period. We can assume that high-ranking officials analyzed the outcomes of the winter war between Finland and the Soviet Union (November 1939–March 1940) and instructed the party organs to pay their attention to developing skiing skills in draftees.

The problem of military training for the population acquired special importance as the war began. In August 1941, the bureau of the *oblast* party committee demanded training Communists first of all and carrying out the drilling under the conditions similar to field conditions and those of combat actions. It was ordered to teach people of the draft age how to shoot in any position or shoot when skiing as well as improve their physical training. All this was to be implemented without any material and technical bases or instruction materials (even visual aids). The bureau of the *oblast* party committee applied to the Military Council of the North-Caucasian Military District in October 1941 and requested the following instruction materials for military training of the republican population: wooden dummy tanks (18 pieces), wooden light machine rifles (27 pieces), wooden heavy machine guns (22 pieces), wooden hand grenades (1,050 pieces), and wooden rifles (3,400 pieces).

In fact, the actual military actions showed that all of these measures and figures turned out to be fabulous. The war was raging for four months by that time but even wooden dummy weapons were missing for military training, let alone real weapons. However, in spite of all serious shortcomings and problems the Kalmyk people as well as all Soviet people recognized the deadly threat threatening the country and were determined to sacrifice everything for the victory including their own lives.

The deadly threat meant not only defeat and enslavement for the peoples of the Soviet Union but also physical extirpation for most people as well as national, state, and social disaster.

The Communist Party managed to convince most people of the danger and difficulty of the fight, assurance of the fact that the war was just, hatred and disdain for fascists, need to strain every nerve and assurance of the victory by means of immense ideological and propaganda activities.

The Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) set a particular goal for the propaganda activities in August 1941. The resolution adopted at the August plenary session of the *oblast* committee assigned the following objectives: to carry out "agitation works" aimed at the victory, to explain the essence of fascism and explicate that it brings grief, destruction, and death. "We must speak about this day and night everywhere, even if a single man would be listening to us... This is necessary for intensifying the rage in the masses and improving the total dedication to defend the Motherland."

Numerous meetings and gatherings organized and held by the party in the very first days of the war boosted the morale of the population. Having heard the morning government communiqué about the sudden attack of fascist Germany against the USSR on the radio on June 22, 1941 and V.M. Molotov's appeal at 12 o'clock, the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) organized and held meetings devoted to the perfidious attack of Germany in all population centers and at enterprises, institutions, *sovkhozes*, *kolkhozes*, and tractor stations of the republic. Head of the republican government and member of the bureau of the *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) N.L. Garyayev as well as representatives from veterans, youth, and workers spoke at the meeting held in Elista at 16:00 on June 22, 1941. All of them were speaking about the real threat for the country, readiness to sacrifice everything to save the motherland, and determination to defeat the enemy as well as sincere confidence in the victory.

The same day, at 21:00 on June 22, the *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) held a meeting on mobilization

readiness where heads of all state and economic organs as well as public organizations took part.

Under military conditions, the party brought into action additional mechanisms of ideological impact on all layers of the population including village residents. According to the resolution adopted by the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) of November 17, 1941, the party propagandist apparatus in *sovkhozes*, *kolkhozes*, and tractor stations was reorganized. In compliance with the resolution adopted by the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) on November 26, 1941, political departments in charge of activities of party and Komsomol organizations in *kolkhozes* were formed in *sovkhozes* and tractor stations. The political department head that would simultaneously be the tractor station or *sovkhoz*'s deputy director for political activities and compliance with economic plans was appointed by the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) upon recommendation of the first secretary of the *oblast* party committee and heads of political administrations of the People's Commissariat for Land and *Myasosovkhozrest*ⁱ of the Kalmyk ASSR.²²

Kalmykia sent 20,082 persons including 2,561 Communists (46% of the total number of the republican party organization) and 2,345 Komsomol members (17.4% of the total number of the Komsomol organization) to the front in the first nine months of the war (June 1941–March 1942). However, certain mobilization resources were still available. According to U.B. Ochirov, over 13,000 persons at the draft age were registered in the republic by the spring of 1942. Moreover, 1,200 volunteer girls submitted their applications to Kalmyk military registration and enlistment offices.²³

Only 561 persons including 134 women (24%) joined the republican party organization for the same period. Instead of the male experts who left for the front, the state launched training sessions for 814 female tractor operators, 363 combiners, and 138 drivers (all of them underwent in-service training).

Kalmykia supplied the Red Army with 16,093 horses, 3,115 saddles, 1,364 pair-horse carts with harness, 58 cars, 641 trucks, and 100 caterpillar tractors for the very first war months. Moreover, the population and local Soviets provided 20,000 head of cattle and 34 million rubles to the Defense Fund. All cars as well as combustive and lubricating materials

ⁱ Translator's note: *Myasosovkhozrest*—the Trust for Meat and *Sovkhozes*.

available in different organizations, enterprises, and institutions were transferred to the Motor Transport Administration of the republican Sovnarkom and sent to the front.

The *oblast's* party and Soviet authorities paid much attention to organizing the nation-wide aid to the front. In September and October of 1941, they organized the collection of warm clothes for Red Army soldiers three times. The session of the bureau of the *oblast's* party committee held on October 6, 1941 dismissed chairman of the Dolbansky *ulus* commission Kyuryutov for poor organization of collecting warm clothes; chairman of the Ketchenerovsky *ulus* commission Korneyev was given a reprimand. It can be seen that the Kalmyk *oblast's* party committee resting upon state authorities resorted mainly to administrative measures in this direction rather than persuasion and explanation. Nevertheless, due to the active actions taken by the population and its initiatives (following the example of *kolkhoz* members of the Lenin suburban *kolkhoz* in Elista) aimed at organizing such activities (special commissions and tailoring shops where mainly housewives worked), the republic collected and provided soldiers with 23,159 pairs of felt boots, 3,652 short fur coats, 8,296 fur caps, 9,555 cotton wool sweaters, 7,789 cotton wool trousers, 4,162 pairs of fur mittens, 1,023 pullovers, 964 fur waistcoats, 16,608 pairs of wool socks, 1,458 warm scarves, 2,871 warm shirts, 5,515 pairs of foot wraps, and 10,650 pairs of wool mittens and gloves, as well as many other things during the period from the beginning of the war to March 1, 1942. Workers from the republic sent gifts for November 7, 1941 with the total weight of 62,442 kg or eight carriages to soldiers, as well as 8,000 personal packages.²⁴

Kalmykia showed great care for families of servicemen and evacuated population from the very first days of the war. According to the decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on June 26, 1941 and entitled *On the Procedure for Fixing and Paying Allowances to Families of Privates and Junior Commanders during the War Time*, party and Soviet bodies of the republic were engaged in the preparation for fixing and paying allowances on a timely basis, job placement, sending children to pre-school institutions, and providing fuel, accommodation, and food for families of servicemen. As many as 1,781 families of servicemen from the first draft were provided with allowances as early as during the first month of the war, and 903 women were employed.

Directors of economic organizations, institutions, and enterprises showed sufficient flexibility and orderliness when accepting, accommodating, and employing people evacuated from different regions of the

country. By February of 1942, as many as 7,199 persons including 2,150 children were accepted and accommodated in Elista and Kalmyk *uluses*, and more than 4,000 persons were employed.²⁵

The resolution of financial and household problems for families of servicemen and evacuated population was of great value both in the social and ideological regard (soldiers knew that their families were safe and this boosted their moral and spirit plus formed ideas of the stability and humanity of the socialist regimen in the mass conscience).

Extra problems emerged in the work of party and Soviet organs of the republic due to the need to accept and accommodate the cattle evacuated from the Rostov, Voroshilovgrad, and Stalingrad *oblasts*, and the Ordzhonikidze and Krasnodar *Krays*. The republic started getting ready for accepting the evacuated cattle in August 1941, yet the cattle was driven from these regions very slowly, without any separation of ill animals from healthy ones. The Kalmyk *oblast* party committee had to inform the USSR Soviet of People's Commissars thereof in October. Over 300,000 head of different cattle were driven to Kalmykia in late 1941 when there were frosts. In spite of the complicated conditions of cold winter, absence of any physical infrastructure and lack of human resources, it was necessary to provide the animals with food and accommodation, as well as arrange treatment for them, ensure their safety, and prepare them for further driving across the Volga.

Thus, one of the reasons explaining problems with wintering for the cattle in the republic was a considerable growth of the number of the cattle stock and reduction of the norm of fodder units per head (in addition, there were incredible frosts in Kalmykia in the winter of 1941/1942—up to -40°C). In October 1941–March 1942, a lot of cattle died in the republic: 21,000 head (10%) of bovine animals, 172,000 head (11%) of sheep, 2,367 head (5.8%—in *kolkhozes* only) of horses, and 125 (2.4%—in *kolkhozes* only) of camels.

The Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) made a conclusion based on the results of the cattle wintering that the major reason for such a great number of deaths was the loss of vigilance. P.V. Lavrentiyev, the first secretary of the *oblast* party committee, wrote in his report to the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) that as a result of the loss of vigilance “enemies—former kulaks, White Army officers, *zaisangs*, and *gelyungs*—made their way to certain *kolkhozes* and *sovkhoses*, and began killing the cattle there making use of severe weather conditions (-40°C) and prevalence of hoof-and-mouth disease brought by the evacuated cattle.”²⁶

This conclusion made by the *oblast* party committee features the false pattern that probably became prevalent, according to Yu.A. Polyakov, due to the pre-war propaganda, and alleging that former kulaks, officers, and clergy, as well as representatives of other social groups could cooperate with the enemy in case of an armed conflict.²⁷ In practice it was just the other way. That is why in spite of all effort spared by P.V. Lavrentiyev, the first secretary of the *oblast* party committee, prosecutor and internal affair authorities of the republic failed to find out “the saboteurs and enemies who killed the cattle.” P.V. Lavrentiyev wanted the authorities to confirm that “the loss of cattle was explained by enemies” by any means. His “assurance” of this was based on the stereotyped image introduced to the mass consciousness of communists and most Soviet people by active official party propaganda aimed against the revolution’s and people’s enemies.

Of course, it is difficult to understand him now. Is it possible that P.V. Lavrentiyev sincerely believed in the conclusion of the *oblast* party committee about the enemies? Or did he want to disavow? However, he kept applying to the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and requesting to instruct the Prosecutor’s Office and NKVD of the USSR so that they could find those guilty of the cattle death in Kalmykia and bring them to responsibility. Moreover, he submitted a proposal about dismissing republican prosecutor P.Ya. Khonkhoshev and people’s commissar for internal affairs Goncharov “who reduced the political value of cattle breeding preservation.”

As the front line was getting closer, the republican authorities concentrated their attention on the evacuation of material resources and people. The Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) and the Sovnarkom of the Kalmyk ASSR adopted a resolution entitled *On the Construction of Temporary Bridges across the Volga for Cattle Evacuation* on July 23, 1942. It provided for urgent measures for the construction of temporary bridges across the Volga, which were required for driving the cattle belonging to the republic, as well as cattle evacuated from the Rostov, Voroshilovgrad, and Stalingrad *oblasts*, and the Ordzhonikidze and Krasnodar *krais*.

However, because of the need in reassurance and fear of making an “unnecessary step” without the Central Committee’s knowledge or bearing any responsibility, P.V. Lavrentiyev, who was brought up in compliance with the strict party discipline, was waiting for instructions from supreme authorities and delayed evacuating the cattle and valuable property until the Germans invaded the territory of the republic. His instructions

suppressed any attempts or initiatives of heads of separate districts, *kolkhozes*, or *sovkhozes* to evacuate their property as the enemy was approaching.

Backward and untimely actions taken by the *oblast* party committee and its first secretary inflicted great damage on the cattle breeding industry in Kalmykia. Only 557,000 head of cattle out of 1,400,000 head were evacuated and driven to the Kazakh SSR, 59,000 head were procured to the state according to the state plan, 30,000 head were provided for military units, 11,000 head of ill cattle were given to *kolkhoz* workers on account of their labor-day units, and 11,000 head remained in *kolkhozes* in unoccupied districts. As many as 62,000 head of cattle died or were lost during driving and crossing. Up to 670,000 head of cattle remained in the Kalmyk territory occupied by Germans.

Having caused a great loss of the republican cattle (over 700,000 head of cattle jointly with those that were left in the temporarily occupied territory) for the second time, P.V. Lavrentiyev declined all responsibility again and shifted responsibility to officials from inferior party and Soviet bodies. In another similar report submitted to the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) on November 18, 1942, he accused heads of *ulus* party and Soviet organs of failing to follow the decision taken by the *oblast* party committee as well as its instructions.

Party and Soviet organs of the republic had to deal with the arrangement of the construction of military facilities as well. Such facilities included the Don Defense Barrier and the Astrakhan–Kizlyar railway line, the construction of which began in September 1941. Replacing all state and economic bodies, the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee adopted a resolution on September 30, 1941 to allocate and send 6,200 workers and 2,150 carts for this construction, and later increased the number of workers up to 9,500 and the number of carts up to 3,030. Due to the high awareness of the importance of these facilities, the enthusiasm, and total dedication of people who were working at the construction site, the part the republic was in charge of was commissioned ahead of schedule. Over 10,000 workers, *kolkhoz* workers, and other employees from Kalmykia took part in the construction of the Don Defense Barrier.²⁸

In November 1941, the State Defense Committee of the country took a decision to form national cavalry units in the territory of the North-Caucasian Military District (NCMD) including two divisions in the Kalmyk ASSR. However, the issue of the cavalry unit formation was examined at the plenary session of the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks), which was held as early as in August

1941. The Kalmyk *oblast* committee planned to form a cavalry regiment within four or six weeks to “demonstrate even greater bravery than Kalmyk regiments had when they participated in the defeat on Napoleon.”²⁹

According to the decree issued by the NCMD on November 25, 1941, the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee and the Kalmyk Sovnarkom passed a joint resolution on November 26 to form cavalry units in each district and in all *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes*, except for fishery ones, by means of mobilization of persons bound to military service and aged 18–40. Every soldier mobilized to the cavalry unit as well as every volunteer was to bring along a saddled horse and all necessary cavalry outfit. In addition, all soldiers and volunteers were to bring along two pairs of underwear including one pair of warm underwear.

The two divisions (one in the stage of recruitment was distributed among other military units) were formed at the expense of republic’s funds. The 110th Kalmyk cavalry division was finally formed in March 1942 and comprised 4,600 persons and 4,744 horses. However, according to recollections of former commanders of the division, many soldiers lacked any military training and did not speak Russian—contrary to the reports of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee submitted to the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) talking about a 90% or 100% preparedness of draft-age men to the military service by early 1942. The training and material base was also scarce (soldiers were making dummy rifles, shells, and other munitions themselves out of everything that was available).³⁰

That is why I can quite agree with A.M. Samsonov who said that “the millions of Soviet soldiers were killed in the battlefield and captured in the summer and autumn of 1941 because the army was not combat-ready to hold off the attack of Germany.”³¹ Under such conditions of draftees’ training, party organs of the country including the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) paid much attention to the moral and political factor (manning military units with communists and Komsomol members) because they considered it as the basis of morale and firmness of soldiers and commanders. To be sure, this factor must be taken into consideration. However, if military skills and weapons of the date were added, it would have been possible to avoid the tragedy in 1941–1942. In spite of all problems related to the training of soldiers, the division (according to the documents, it comprised up to 40% of Communists and Komsomol members and its morale was high) was prepared by the middle of 1942, hardened in the battlefield and dispatched its mission honorably.

The party with its all-embracing propaganda system and having all levers of ideological influence at its disposal mobilized all possible reserves to fight the enemy including poets, writers, musicians, and artists, which created the works calling to defend the motherland and defeat the enemy. Works of such front-line poets as L. Indzhiyev, D. Kugultinov, M. Narmayev, etc. as well as *dzhangarchi*ⁱⁱ M. Basangov played an important role in propagating the ideas of liberty, protection of the homeland, unity, and boosting people's morale.

During the Great Patriotic War ideas of proletarian internationalism, brotherhood, friendship, patriotism, and the leading role of the Russian nation rooted in the mass consciousness due to the propaganda system and ideological upbringing in the Soviet Union were important factors for rallying Soviet people and mobilizing them to defend the country. The "big brother" concept was propagated on an active basis as early as on the eve of the Great Patriotic War. The 19-page work entitled *A letter from the Kalmyk people to its elder brother—the great Russian people—on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Kalmyk ASSR* created by Kalmyk poets and *dzhangarchis* can confirm this. The *oblast* party committee reviewed and approved of it on November 1, 1940 and it was published.³²

After liberation of Kalmykia from Nazi invaders Kalmyk leaders concentrated their efforts on two key lines—reconstructing the destroyed people's economy and rendering all-round assistance to the front.

During the period of temporarily occupation of a part of the Kalmyk territory fascists demolished many housing and public buildings and enterprises, as well as destroyed and took out a lot of tangible assets. The total financial damage incurred by invaders on the republic made up 1,070,324,789 rubles.³³

The Sovnarkom of the Kalmyk ASSR adopted the resolution entitled *On Measures to Organize the Work of Municipal and Republican Organizations in Elista and Render Assistance to the Red Army* on the very first day when occupants were squeezed out of Kalmykia, on January 1, 1943. It provided for measures aimed at reconstructing industrial enterprises, allocating enterprises, organizing the commercial, household, and municipal service of the population, and establishing telephone communications. Much attention was paid to arranging services and accommodation for soldiers from the advancing Red Army.³⁴

All *kolkhozes* and *sovkhoses* as well as some local industrial enterprises were reconstructed by the end of 1943. Laborers of the republic

ii Translator's note: *dzhangarchi*—a bard.

were working selflessly to implement the national economic plan and government tasks. The country government rendered feasible assistance to reconstruct the national economy and culture of the Kalmyk ASSR by providing the republic with 15 million rubles, 6,500 cubic meters of timber, and ten cars in March 1943.³⁵

The courage and dedication of nearly 40 thousand of Kalmyk sons and daughters fighting in the frontlines of the Great Patriotic War supplemented the intensive efforts made by the people of the republic and aimed at rendering assistance to the front, saving people and non-human resources and reconstructing the national economy destroyed during the war.

However, as we know, Stalin signed the resolution about liquidating the Kalmyk ASSR and deporting Kalmyks to the Krasnoyarsk and Altai *krais*, as well as the Omsk and Novosibirsk *oblasts* adopted by the State Defense Committee as early as in the middle of October 1943.

From the very first months of the Great Patriotic War, the Soviet government headed by Josef Stalin groundlessly denounced some peoples, liquidated their national statehoods, and forcibly deported entire peoples from the territories of their republics and *oblasts*. The Autonomous Republic of Volga Germans became the first victim in August 1941. Five autonomous entities (the Karachai Autonomous *Oblast*, the Kalmyk ASSR, the Chechen and Ingush ASSR, the Crimean ASSR, and the Kabardino-Balkarian ASSR) were abolished in the end of 1943 and first half of 1944, and their native populations were repressed on a mass basis and deported to eastern parts of the country, Siberia, Central Asia, and Kazakhstan.

According to official data of the GULAG,ⁱⁱⁱ the NKVD of the USSR, as many as 1,514 thousand persons including 93 thousand Kalmyks were deported from the autonomous republics and *oblasts* and resettled to other regions of the country as of September 5, 1944³⁶ (taking into account the people who died en route, and by September 1944, about 97 or 98 thousand Kalmyks were deported by the middle of 1944).

Documental historical records prove that the active and systematic preparation for deporting Kalmyks was launched officially in October 1943. According to special decree No. 1118-346 adopted by the Sovnarkom of the USSR on October 14, 1943 in compliance with the resolution of the State Defense Committee of the USSR, about ten people's commissariats and State Planning Committee of the USSR as well as government

ⁱⁱⁱ Translator's note: GULAG—the Chief Administration of Corrective Labor Camps and Colonies.

bodies of many USSR republics, *krais*, and *oblasts* were engaged in deporting Kalmyks. According to it, different people's commissariats and departments developed special instructions and regulations (*Instruction of the People's Commissariat for Land about the Procedure for Accepting the Property of Resettled Kolkhozes, Kolkhoz Workers, Individuals, Workers, and Employees* of October 18, 1943, etc.) and special meetings under auspices of the NKVD of the USSR were held.³⁷ Many military and civil authorities were engaged in preparing the deportation, transportation, and allocation of Kalmyks since then.

The operation on deporting Kalmyks was performed in strict compliance with the instruction entitled *On the Procedure for Taking Measures Related to the Ulus Case* and approved by the NKVD of the USSR as early as on December 1, 1943. The instruction regulated all of the issues related to the deportation of Kalmyks in detail. It provided detailed instructions on people subject to deportation—"all Kalmyk residents of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast*." For some reason, this important document signed by the first deputy of the People's Commissar for Internal Affairs of the USSR Serov referred to Kalmykia as an autonomous *oblast*. Perhaps, this can be explained by neglect on the part of those who made the document. It can be seen from the document that the accusations made against Kalmyks were absurd and groundless. Thus, investigators were instructed as follows: "After the search, the operating executive is to advise the resettled family to give away participants of detachments created by Germans as well as people who assisted the detachments in fighting the Soviet power during the German occupation.

Regardless of the behavior of members of the deported family, the operating executive is to say that because Kalmyks rendered assistance to German invaders during the occupation of Kalmykia by fascists on an active basis, delivered honest Soviet people to Germans and kept sheltering the bandit groups created by Germans, the Soviet government resolved to take special measures against them."³⁸ While Kalmyk men were fighting in the front, Kalmyk old people, women, and children were accused of the aforesaid.

In the first half of December, the preparation for the deportation of Kalmyks was almost completed (lists of persons were made by centers of population not only in the republic but also beyond it, information on the available property was collected, instructions on how to perform the operation related to expulsing the Kalmyk population and fill in registration forms were prepared, and the transportation plan stipulating for the number of vehicles, distance, and travel time from each center of population to

the destination point as well as possible contingency situations was developed), and the situation in the republic was examined and analyzed through the intelligence service.

After the thorough preparation for deporting Kalmyks, a decree entitled *On Liquidation of the Kalmyk ASSR and Formation of the Astrakhan Oblast as a Part of the RSFSR* was adopted by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on December 27, 1943 by means of consultations after the preliminary examination and adoption by the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks).

Recently declassified documents disclose the real picture of what was happening in the early and cold morning on December 28, the day when Kalmyks were deported. The dry official report of one of the military officers describes it as follows: "At 4:00 the cordon was thrown around. Operating executives were on duty by 5:30 and launched the operation at 6:30. The operation was performed without any noise or fuss. All people were gathered at the collection station by 10:00 and entrucked... The people were entrucked... The trucks started their trip... Combing Kalmyk houses failed to reveal any other Kalmyks... Sheep were counted."

Thus, according to the decree of December 27, the Kalmyk ASSR was abolished and Kalmyks were resettled to eastern parts of the country—Ural, Sakhalin, the transpolar regions, and the Altai. The provisions of the decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR covered the Kalmyks who were taking part in military actions as well. Kalmyks (on the basis of their nationality) were withdrawn from military units and sent to labor camps of the NKVD of the USSR. Almost all of the Kalmyk soldiers who were fighting against the enemy from the very first days of the war were humiliated and even killed because of the most difficult working conditions at the Shirokovo hydroelectric power station as well as other economic and construction sites of the Shirokovo NKVD camps.

It is difficult and sometimes even impossible to understand the logic of Soviet leaders of that time. After having awarded Kalmyk O.-G.Ts. Boldyrev with the most honorable decoration of the country (Lenin Order) for his courage and merits when fighting the enemy, they sent him to the camp of the NKVD of the USSR.³⁹

The deportation conducted on December 28–31, 1943 involved mainly the Kalmyk population in the territory of the Kalmyk ASSR and Kalmyk district of the Rostov *oblast*. Following the main group, Kalmyks from separate centers of population from the Rostov *oblast* were deported in late March 1944 and from the Stalingrad *oblast* in June 1944. The total

number of deported Kalmyks including soldiers and officers made up 120,000 persons.

Official government documents that were not published explained the peoples' expulsion as an attempt to loosen the ethnic tension and stabilize the political situation in one or another region of the country. However, we think that the key reasons for the action were not only to exterminate the whole people but also to shift a part of the responsibility from the Soviet leaders for their serious mistakes resulting in utter defeats during the first months of the war, as well as great losses in human and material resources on national minorities, that is, the leaders pursued their own goals. In particular, the above-mentioned decree accused the entire Kalmyk people of betrayal on a national scale and sabotage during the evacuation of cattle and property and reconstruction of the national economy, which was destroyed during the war.

As we know, German troops broke through the Southern front, approached Stalingrad, and entered in the territory of the republic in the summer of 1942. Was it through the fault of the Kalmyk people that the Voroshilovsk–Divnoye railway line turned out to be exposed and Germans moved along it without any resistance? Was it through the fault of Kalmyks that the Red Army failed to defend the Southern front?

Meanwhile, Kalmyks kept fighting the enemy even under temporary occupation. There were over 20 partisan groups, six clandestine *ulus* committees, and five patriotic groups in the Kalmyk steppe in 1942. As many as 14,000 residents of the republic were awarded with orders and medals, and 22 persons were given the title of Hero of the Soviet Union for their courage and heroism when fighting against fascist occupants.

Josef Stalin as the Supreme Commander-in-Chief sent telegrams of welcome addressed to the Kalmyk people and Kalmyk laborers more than once during the Great Patriotic War. Thus, he appreciated the self-denying work and disinterested aid to the front rendered by Kalmyk people three times in 1943 alone.

At the same time, it turns out that Stalin and his people already foreclosed the destiny of the Kalmyk people. Kalmyk people were deported on December 28 in the course of a prompt action. Mainly women (33,809 persons or 36.4%) and children (40,157 persons or 43.2%), along with helpless elderly and disabled persons (19,017 persons or 20.4%),⁴⁰ enlisted as men, were sent to Siberia and other regions without any food or belongings by force, hastily (within one or two hours) and guarded by armed soldiers. As many as 46 trains, almost 10,000 soldiers and officers, as well as huge number of vehicles, military equipment, and weapons,

which were badly needed in the front during the Great Patriotic War, were engaged in organizing the deportation of Kalmyks.

Such factors as hurried deportation, unheated cars that were not good even for transporting cattle in winter, severe Siberian frost, inhuman conditions, and absence of any medical aid en route resulted in terrible moral, mental, and physical consequences. Almost 2% of the deported Kalmyks (over 1,600 persons) died during the trip and the same number of persons was ill when they arrived at the destination point. Upon arrival at places of their settlement, 1,510 persons (9.2%) out of the number of deported Kalmyks died only in the Novosibirsk *oblast* during 1944. Thus, we can say that almost the same percentage of Kalmyks died in a year because they were kept under the same conditions both on the way and upon arrival. An available documental source confirms that there were 83,688 Kalmyks in the special settlement by early 1945,⁴¹ that is, over 13,000 persons (13–14%) died during the period from the deportation to early 1945.

As many as 3,735 Kalmyk children (9.3%, without taking into account those who died on the way and in 1944) died in 1945 alone as a result of the deportation; only 351 children were born for the same year. The remaining references issued by the GULAG department, the NKVD of the USSR, as well as documents informing on conditions for Kalmyks in special settlements, uncover the tragedy of the Kalmyk people during the deportation period.

The number of Kalmyks decreased by almost 40,000 persons (taking into account the new-born Kalmyks and people returning from the front and camps of the NKVD of the USSR) from the end of December 1943 to the early 1950s. The gene pool of the Kalmyk people was undermined and the structure of the Kalmyk population was deformed because of this.

It should be noted that not only deported Kalmyks but also the remaining population, households, centers of population, party and Soviet organizations, schools and health care institutions found themselves in quite a difficult situation at first. Because of the sudden deportation of Kalmyks, most *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes* badly lacked labor force, schools, first aid stations and stores were closed, and households, village soviets, and party organizations were liquidated. First secretary of the Maloderbetovskiy district committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) Lychakov reported at the election meeting on June 13, 1944: “In this connection, January and February of 1944 were the months when all district organizations suspended their activities because it was Kalmyks, which went away, who worked in the organizations and institutions. As for Russian people, they were mobilized for collecting the cattle and property.

According to approximate and inflated data, 6,599 Kalmyk persons out of 14,235 left after the expulsion of Kalmyks. Three villages and two settlement soviets remained out of ten, and six *kolkhozes* out of 14. No labor resources to work for state, cooperative, public, and other organizations remained.” The number of schools in the Priyutnensky district reduced from 21 to 10, and that of pupils from 1,361 to 653. Deported Kalmyk people left a lot of cattle in the district: 10,410 head of bovine animals (including 2,579 head in the private sector), 26,715 sheep (including 2,779 sheep in the private sector), 629 horses, 144 camels, and 37 pigs.⁴²

The *krais* and *oblasts* that obtained the distributed territory of the Kalmyk ASSR would liquidate, reorganize, and rename its districts, settlements, *kolkhozes*, and *sovkhozes* in 1944. Their party organizations followed the spirit of the time and were carrying out ideological activities aimed at approving and supporting the policy of Kalmyks’ deportation pursued by the party and state. However, the Kalmyk people managed to withstand and rub through the miseries and hardships under such severe conditions mainly due to the support and disinterested aid rendered by Siberian people. They did what they could to help get at least a bit comfortable in the new places. Some heads of households and enterprises tried to promote employment of Kalmyks, informed party and Soviet authorities about their difficult situation in dismay, and even suggested to take urgent measures to save them.

Despite the difficult conditions and lack of clothes and food, laborious Kalmyks were aware of the need to work for the front and worked at the destinations where they had been deported without sparing either their effort or health, doing their best to defeat the enemy and reconstruct the people’s economy. Secretary of the Novosibirsk *oblast* committee of the All-Russian Communist Party (of Bolsheviks) M. Kulagin reported in January 1947: “The general body of Kalmyks has been employed by now and works conscientiously... The labor efficacy in Kalmyks has greatly improved in 1945 and 1946 as compared to the first year of deportation. There are many Stakhanovites, shock workers, and people over-achieving the norms and provided with bonuses for their active work. Directors of the organizations, enterprises, *sovkhozes*, and *kolkhozes* where Kalmyks work are positive about them. Kalmyks working in the field of cattle breeding have the highest performance indicators.”⁴³ It is known that many deported Kalmyks were awarded Soviet orders and medals including the most honorable ones: the Lenin and Labor Red Banner orders.

In addition to deporting Kalmyks, the country government took measures to toughen the regimen in the areas where they lived. They were not

allowed to leave the areas without the permission of the commandant's office. There was more to come: the government of the country was probably trying to annihilate the Kalmyk people as an ethnic group. According to the decree entitled *On the criminal liability of persons escaping from the places of mandatory and permanent residence in remote areas of the Soviet Union to which they were deported to during the Great Patriotic War* issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued on November 26, 1948, special settlers were to retain their status forever and were not entitled to return to the places where they used to live before. The decree also stipulated for responsibilities such as 20-year penal servitude for escaping from the place of mandatory settlement. In addition, the decree prevented Kalmyks from entering any educational institutions (technical schools and higher institutions).

In spite of the permanent stiffening of the conditions of deported Kalmyks, the very first signs of the Thaw in the public and political life beginning to emerge after Stalin's death resulted in gradual mitigation of conditions for special settlers. The decree entitled *On lifting some restrictions in the legal status of special settlers* issued by the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR on July 5, 1954 deregistered special settlers' children younger than 16 years and those over 16 that were students at educational institutions.

The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued another decree entitled *On lifting restrictions in the legal status of Kalmyks and their families residing in special settlements* on March 17, 1956. It followed a number of acts issued by the Soviet of Ministers and Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1954–1955.

The decree issued by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (KPSS) on November 24, 1956 attempted to assess the tyranny over the repressed peoples for the first time. It said that the mass deportation of entire peoples was neither necessary nor dictated by any military needs but was rather a display of the personality cult. The document recognized that the measures taken were insufficient and could not rehabilitate the groundlessly deported peoples in full and restore their equal rights among other peoples residing in the country. First of all, it was suggested to eliminate the injustice committed against the Kalmyk, Karachai, Balkarian, Chechen, and Ingush peoples by restoring their national autonomies.

We need to say that the acts were just half measures avoiding any criticism regarding the previous policy of mass deportations. They said that the people were deported “in connection with the war time circumstances”

and they “did not need” to live in special settlements anymore. Not a word was said about any political rehabilitation of the deported peoples. They were considered to be apostate peoples and remained apostate peoples with one difference only: they were forgiven people, not condemned ones.

The 20th congress of the party resolved to eliminate the injustice committed to the Kalmyk and other peoples and reconstruct their national statehood, thereby providing necessary conditions for their national and cultural revival and development.

This process took 13 years. The Supreme Soviet of the USSR at its sixth session held in February 1957 adopted a decree entitled *On the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast as a part of the RSFSR*. The Kalmyk statehood was restored in the form that existed before October 1935—as a constituent member of the RSFSR but a part of the Stavropol Kray.

The decree entitled *On the formation of the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast as a part of the Stavropol Kray* issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on January 9, 1957 defined the borders as well as administrative and territorial structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR formed the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast as follows: from the Stavropol Kray—town of Stepnoi (now Elista), Chernozemelsky and Stepnoi districts as well as northwest parts of the Apanasenskovo and Arzgirsk districts (within the borders of the former Priyutnensky district); from the Astrakhan oblast—west parts of the Nikolsky and Yenotayevsky districts (within the borders of the former Yustinsky and Ketchenerovsky districts), Pridorozhnyi village soviet of the Privolzhsky district, west part of the Limansky district with its east border passing along with the railroad line (between Basinskaya station and Crossing No. 8), and Kaspiisky district (within the borders of the former Lagansky and Ulankholsky districts); from the Stalingrad oblast—Sarpinsky district; from the Rostov oblast—Zapadnyi and Stepnovsky districts.

In compliance with the established limits of the autonomous oblast and districts, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR approved of the administrative and territorial structure of the Kalmyk Autonomous Oblast on January 12, 1957. It comprised the town of Stepnoi, which was renamed as Elista according to the same decree, and the following districts: Zapadnyi (with the administrative center in Bashanta), Kaspiisky (administrative center: Kaspiisky), Priozernyi (administrative center: settlement of Priozernyi), Priyutnensky (administrative center: village of Priyutnoye), Sarpinsky (administrative center: village of Sadovoye), Tselin-

nyi (administrative center: settlement of Stepnoi, which was renamed as the settlement of Tselinnyi according to the same decree), Chernozemelsky (administrative center: Krasnyi Kamyshannik, which was renamed as the settlement of Komsomolsky), Yustinsky (administrative center: settlement of Trudovoi, which was renamed as the settlement of Yusta), Yashaltinsky (administrative center: village of Stepnoye, which was renamed as the settlement of Yashalta), and Yashkulsky (administrative center: settlement of Peschanyi).

The Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* was reconstructed and comprised one municipal, ten districts, two settlement, and 52 village soviets. Its territory made up 75.9 thousand square kilometers. There were 20 tractor stations as well as machine and cattle breeding stations, over 60 *sovkhozes* and *kolkhozes*, two mechanized forest farms, a tractor and car motors overhaul shop, three car fleets of the *Rossovkhoztrans*,^{iv} a mechanized column of the Motor Transport Ministry, construction trust, fishery plant, etc. The population of the *oblast* amounted to 118,000 persons including 41,300 Kalmyks (35.1%).⁴⁴ At the same time, the organizational bureau of the *oblast* party committee and organizational committee of the *oblast* soviet of workers' delegates organized by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Stavropol *Kray* Party Committee in December 1956 were temporarily charged with reconstructing the economy, accepting the people coming back, and getting ready for the formation of *oblast* party and Soviet authorities until the election.

The organizational committee proceeded with preparing the elections for the *oblast*, district, village, and settlement soviets of workers' delegates from the very first days of the autonomy reconstruction. This issue was discussed at the third session of the committee. In compliance with the Decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on December 22, 1956 about the election to local soviets of the RSFSR, the organizational committee of the *Oblast* Soviet formed 79 election districts for election to the Kalmyk *Oblast* Soviet of Workers' delegates on January 14, 1957. The next day, on January 15, it approved of the membership of district election commissions and *oblast* election commission for the Kalmyk *Oblast* Soviet headed by S.S. Utin, a teacher from the Agriculture Mechanization Vocational School, comprising 11 members. On January 23, 1957 the organizational committee approved of the membership of election commissions for district workers' delegates.

^{iv} Translator's note: *Rossovkhoztrans*—the Chief Administration for Motor Transport of the RSFSR Ministry for *sovkhozes*.

As many as 353 district election commissions for elections to district soviets, 43 election commissions—to the municipal soviet and 1,021 election commissions—to village and settlement soviets were formed in the *oblast*. All election commissions comprised 7,427 members including 2,290 women (30.8%), 3,579 KPSS members (48.2%), and 959 Komsomol members (12.9%).

Elections to the *oblast*, municipal, district, village, and settlement soviets were held on March 3, 1957. The voter turnout amounted to 100% (77,880 persons). Due to the autonomy reconstruction, the enthusiasm of the population was high and affected the voting results (99.3%). Unlike the previous and following election campaigns, the election was characterized by the lower degree of over-organization and absence of wide agitation and propagandist activities.

The party held a majority of seats in the *oblast* soviet (50 party members or 63.3%). The level of the members' education substantially increased: 27 persons had higher education (34.2%), 19 persons had secondary education (24%), and 33 persons had elementary education (41.8%). As many as 32 Kalmyks (40.5%) were elected as members of the *Oblast* Soviet for the first time after the long-term exile.

Heads of the *oblast's* enterprises as well as party and Soviet authorities of at least the district level held a great number of seats in the *Oblast* Soviet. As many as 33 delegates (41.7%) were high-ranking officials. There were 28 women (35.4%) in the *Oblast* Soviet of that convocation.

Elections of members to the Elista municipal, district, settlement, and village soviets of the autonomous *oblast* were held in the same election districts and the same day, on March 3, 1957. There were 1,438 members belonging to lower government bodies including delegates in the Elista municipal soviet, 340 delegates including 97 Kalmyks in the district soviets, 68 delegates in the settlement soviets, and 987 delegates including 113 Kalmyks in the village soviets. Thus, the government of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* was formed in full in March 1957.⁴⁵

The Kalmyk autonomy and its statehood were reconstructed under conditions of missing industrial and building base or social infrastructure. Kalmyks coming back from the 13-year exile saw that many of their villages and settlements as well as capital were ruined. People coming back to Kalmykia had to live in tents, temporary sheds, and improvised dug-outs. Moreover, they faced the problem of employment.

Taking into consideration the difficult conditions, the Soviet of Ministers of the RSFSR provided Kalmykia with 73 million rubles, 40,000 cubic meters of timber, unit built houses, building materials, cars, tractors,

etc. for purposes of capital development in 1957. Aid was also rendered to villages. *Sovkhozes* received about nine million rubles, almost 1,000 tractors, 680 combine harvesters, over 350 cars and other agricultural machinery for the construction of industrial facilities in 1957–1958.⁴⁶

As many as 18,158 families (72,665 persons) came back from the exile in 1957–1959. As many as 33,401 Kalmyks lived outside Kalmykia. Over one million rubles were given to families in acute need as well as war and labor veterans as non-recurring aid, and residential houses in the amount of 734 thousand rubles were built. Kalmyks bought over 8,000 head of bovine animals and built 5,000 individual houses out of the proceeds of credit.⁴⁷

When the autonomy of Kalmykia was reconstructed (1957), there were 25 *kolkhozes* and 37 *sovkhozes* (mainly cattle-breeding ones) in its territory. The total number of productive cattle in all of the economies amounted to 1,681,800 head, including 44,500 cows and 1 524 000 sheep by the time.⁴⁸ However, in spite of the sufficient amount of cattle, the *sovkhozes* were unprofitable.

People's needs in housing, social infrastructure, and the production base of *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes* defined the direction and specific nature of the Kalmyk economy. Along with traditional cattle breeding, the construction industry, production of building materials, and motor transport manufacturing were developing.

As the key lines of the *oblast's* economic development were determined, the *oblast's* political system was finally formed. The 18th *Oblast* Party Conference held on December 28–29, 1957 formed the *oblast* organization. The conference representing 2,557 Communists elected the *oblast* committee of the KPSS comprising 75 members and 25 candidate members, bureau of the *oblast* party committee comprising 11 persons, first secretary of the *oblast* committee of the KPSS—N.I. Zhezlov, secretary of the organizational bureau of the Kalmyk *oblast* party organization and representative of the Stavropol *kray's* committee of the KPSS. Almost at the same time the *oblast* Komsomol organization (288 primary organizations comprising 10,078 persons headed by the first secretary of the *oblast* committee of the VLKSM B.P. Nadbitov)⁴⁹ and *oblast* trade union organization (headed by chairman of the *oblast* trade union council B.O. Mantsynov) were formed.

The population of the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* made up about 120,000 persons by the time Kalmyks were coming back. As many as 64,900 Kalmyks came back to Kalmykia by early 1959, which was 61.2% of the total number of Kalmyks (106,066 persons) living in the USSR

then. Meanwhile, according to the census of 1939, the number of Kalmyks in the USSR made up 134,327 persons. Consequently, the number of Kalmyks dropped by 28,261 persons during the war and exile years, without taking into account the natural growth. If we take into consideration the fact that the share of children in the Kalmyk population amounted to 40% and their death rate was twice as much as the birth rate (2:1), the number of Kalmyks decreased by 40,000 persons for the aforesaid period based on the low growth of the population.

As a substantial part of Kalmyks returned home, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR transformed the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* into an autonomous republic in July 1958. This seemed to be a triumph of justice because the Kalmyk national statehood liquidated in 1943 was finally reconstructed. Thus, 192 million rubles were invested in the republican economy in 1959 alone. However, the adopted state acts did not say a word about full political rehabilitation and setting the Kalmyk people free from any charges.

The decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on August 1, 1958 charged the *oblast* Soviet of workers' delegates and its executive committee with temporary management of the economic and cultural development in the territory of the *oblast* until the election to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was held. The same year, the *oblast* executive committee proceeded to forming republican government bodies in accordance with the current general vertical system based on democratic centralism principles, that is, a unitary state in practice.

After the Kalmyk ASSR was reconstructed, according to the *Temporary Regulations on Elections to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR* adopted by the Kalmyk *oblast* executive committee on October 9, 1958, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was elected, as opposed to the 1937 constitutional provision, by Kalmyk citizens in election districts for a four-year term based on one member from 2,000 persons of the population in 1958. In defiance of the formal logic of the Kalmyk ASSR Constitution (Article 102), the Temporary Regulations introduced the age qualification for people elected as members of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR—21 years.

The election to the supreme authority of the Kalmyk ASSR was actually held on October 19, 1958 in the atmosphere of moral satisfaction and inspiration because of the republic's reconstruction. This atmosphere had a great impact on the voter turnout: 103,865 persons (99.4%) out of 103,886 took part in the election.⁵⁰

As a result of the voting, all of the suggested candidates were elected as members of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (second convocation) without any alternatives. The republican Supreme Soviet of the second convocation was characterized by an evident increase in the share of top managers (50.6%). All 11 members of the bureau of the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the KPSS as well as 19 members of the *oblast* party committee (30 members out of 75 members of the *oblast* party committee became delegates) and six first secretaries of district committees of the KPSS formed a part of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. Only eight teachers, doctors, writers, and researchers were elected.

In compliance with the general policy, special attention was paid to the number of party delegates to prove the inviolacy of the Communist and non-party bloc by figures. That is why the share of party members in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, second convocation, exceeded 50%. As many as 36 delegates of the Kalmyk *oblast* Soviet were elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR again.

As compared to the first convocation of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, the share of women increased from 24.6% to 36.8%, and that of workers and *kolkhoz* laborers decreased from 29.2% to 26.3% and from 32.3% to 23.1%, respectively. The educational level of delegates changed substantially for 20 years. While in 1938 there were only 9.2% of delegates with higher education and 73.8% of delegates with elementary education in the Supreme Soviet, two delegates of the Supreme Soviet of the second convocation had academic degrees, 30 members (31.6%) had higher education, and the number of delegates with elementary education fell down to 44.2% in 1958. Such membership of the republican Supreme Soviet worked until the next election held in 1963.⁵¹

The first session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (second convocation) held on October 28, 1958 formed the government of the republic—Soviet of Ministers headed by its chairman E.A. Sangayev and three of his deputies—comprising ten ministers, chairmen of the State Planning Committee and Security Committee, as well as heads of two administrations; it also elected seven standing commissions, Presidium of the Supreme Soviet comprising 11 members (almost all of them were members of the *oblast* committee bureau), and Supreme Court of the Kalmyk ASSR.

The same session introduced 40 amendments and changes to the 1937 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR; that is, in fact it was approved in a new version because no changes or amendments were made in the Constitution from 1937 to 1958. It is worth mentioning that Article 64 that pro-

vided internal affairs organs with a special status was excluded from the Kalmyk Constitution of 1937.

Since the Kalmyk Autonomous *Oblast* was transformed into the autonomy republic and its government bodies were formed, on January 9, 1959 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR scheduled the election to the Soviet of Nationalities, Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in Kalmykia for Sunday, March 1, 1959 in compliance with Article 35 of the USSR Constitution. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted two more decrees on January 9: *On election districts for election to the Soviet of Nationalities from the Kalmyk ASSR* and *On the terms of election campaign, election districts, district election commissions, lists of voters, certificates to confirm the voting right, and ballot boxes during the election to the Soviet of Nationalities from the Kalmyk ASSR*.

The former decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR formed 11 election districts (Nos. 641–651 inclusive)—Elista, Priyutnensky, Yashaltinsky, Chernozemelsky, Kaspiisky, Zapadnyi, Maloderbetovsky, Tselinnyi, Sarpinsky, Yustinsky, and Yashkulsky—on the basis of Article 35 of the USSR Constitution and Articles 25 and 26, *Regulations on the election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR*.

Taking into consideration that the election of delegates to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, from the Kalmyk ASSR was to be held simultaneously with election to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and local soviets, the other decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR resolved that the election campaign aimed at the election of delegates to the Soviet of Nationalities from the Kalmyk ASSR was to be launched 45 days before the election instead of two months stipulated for general elections by the *Regulations on the election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR*. Moreover, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR ordered to form common election districts and district election commissions for the election to the Soviet of Nationalities and for the election to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and local Soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR.

To prepare and hold the election to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, from the Kalmyk ASSR, the Decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on January 17, 1959 formed the Kalmyk ASSR election commission for the election to the Soviet of Nationalities comprising 13 members and headed by B.O. Dzhimbinov, Secretary of the Kalmyk *oblast* party committee. On January 20, 1959 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR formed 11 district election commissions (each comprising 11 per-

sons—chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and eight members) for the election to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, as well as district election commission (district No. 758) for the election to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR comprising a chairman, vice chairman, secretary, and eight members.⁵²

Executive committees of the Elista municipal Soviet and district Soviets approved of the members of 143 district election commissions on January 27–31 and February 2, 1959.

According to the Decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on January 3, 1959, the election to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and election to local soviets scheduled for Sunday, March 1, 1959 were prepared simultaneously. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR scheduled the elections to the district, municipal, settlement, and village soviets of the republic for the same day. On January 5, 1959 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR adopted the decree entitled *On election norms for the elections to the district, municipal, settlement, and village Soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR*.

General meetings of *kolkhozes*, *sovkhozes*, schools, and other industrial enterprises nominated candidate members to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, were held from January 28 to February 6, that is, the stipulated term (10 days) was complied with. A candidate member to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR was nominated on the last day—on February 8, 1959—and he was registered as a candidate member to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR from election district No. 758 on the same day. Candidate members to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, were registered with their respective election districts from January 31 to February 7, 1959.

District pre-election meetings of representatives from election districts approved of all candidate members to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, nominated without any alternatives and recommended them to voters.

Due to the careful selection of candidates, the plan to hold the elections without any alternative candidates (nominating and voting only one candidate from each district) outlined by party organizations predetermined the desired outcome in advance. Not so much the agitation and propagandist activities as party discipline, responsibility, and party members' fear (to a certain extent) related to the results and outcomes of their work in their districts ensured this.

The voter turnout amounted to 104,792 voters (99.99%) out of 104,793 on March 1, 1959. As many as 104,472 voters (99.69%) voted for the 11

candidate members to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, that is, only 320 persons voted against them.

Lidzhi Karvenovich Kilganov born in 1906, a KPSS member and Chairman of the State Planning Committee of the Kalmyk ASSR, was elected as a delegate to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR from election district No. 758.⁵³

Communists held 10 seats out of 12 seats in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR from the Kalmyk ASSR, and seven of them belonged to high-ranking officials of party and Soviet authorities of the USSR (S.V. Kurashov, Public Health Minister of the USSR; P.N. Demichev, executive secretary for the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR; M.A. Ponomaryov, a sector head of the department for party organs of the Central Committee of the KPSS in the RSFSR) and Kalmyk ASSR. The remaining five seats were distributed as follows: intelligentsia—one seat, working class—two seats, and *kolkhoz* peasants—two seats.

In accordance with the decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on January 3, 1959 and the decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on January 5, 1959 entitled *On holding the election to the district, municipal, settlement, and village Soviets of workers' delegates on March 1, 1959*, the election to the Soviets of the town of Elista as well as districts, settlements, and villages of the republic was held simultaneously with the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. The elections were organized and held in compliance with the *Regulations on the election to district, municipal, settlement, and village Soviets of workers' delegates of the Kalmyk ASSR* approved by the Decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on January 5, 1959.

Party organizations of the districts, towns, and villages, as well as institutions and enterprises ensured high voter turnout. Thus, the voter turnout at the election of delegates to the district soviets made up 99.99% and as many as 99.55% of voters voted for the candidate members, the respective figures at the election of delegates to the municipal soviet amounted to 100% and 99.22% and at the election of members to the village soviets—99.98% and 99.45%. As many as 2,070 delegates including 85 members of the municipal soviet, 400 members of the *oblast* soviets, 100 members of the settlement soviets, and 1,485 members of the village soviets were elected.

As many as 726 women (35%) were elected to local soviets of the republic, which matched the average index in the entire country (38.3%). As for the party membership of the delegates (953 Communists or 46%), re-

publican local soviets differed from the mean indices in the entire country (45%) by 1%. A bit more Komsomol members (193 persons or 9.3%) were elected to local soviets than in the entire country on average (7.4%). At the same time, the share of officials was quite high (48.6% while the similar index in the entire country was 38%). Thus, in spite of the volatility of the republican population (Kalmyks kept on coming back to the republic), Kalmyk party organizations strictly complied with the respective instruction of the Central Committee of the KPSS related to the careful selection and formation of local bodies.⁵⁴

Reconstructing the Kalmyk ASSR and taking into consideration the enthusiasm that Kalmyk people showed while reconstructing Kalmykia and its economy (agricultural product procurement plans were surpassed substantially for the first two years), the Soviet state resolved to render moral support to the republic in 1959. In honor of the 350th anniversary of the voluntary joining of Russia by the Kalmyk people, Kalmykia was awarded with the Lenin Order (awarding of republics, *krais*, and *oblasts* was practiced on a broad scale at the period) and many representatives of workers, intelligentsia, and officials were given high government awards and honorary titles of the USSR and RSFSR. As many as 16 persons were given the Lenin Order (including the first secretary of the *oblast* committee of the KPSS M.A. Ponomaryov elected in early 1959), 33 persons—Labor Red Banner, 55 persons—Mark of Distinction, 72 persons—For Labor Merits Medal, 54 persons—For Labor Honors Medal, 7 persons—honorary titles of the RSFSR, and 80 persons—honorary diplomas of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. As many as 33 persons (32%) out of 104 awarded with orders only belonged to high-ranking officials from party and soviet bodies of the republic; 21 persons (16.6%) out of 126 awarded with medals belonged to top-level party and Soviet employees.⁵⁵

Along with the growth in the Kalmyk population, the numerical strength of the party organization of Kalmykia was growing as well. While in 1957 there were 2,196 Communists in the *oblast* party organization, by early 1960 the number of Communists amounted to 5,144, that is, by 2.3 times as much. In September 1961 a Kalmyk (B.B. Gorodovikov serving as a professional soldier from 1927 to late 1960) was elected as the first secretary of the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the KPSS upon recommendation of the Central Committee of the KPSS for the first time in many years. He held this position (in fact, as the head of the republic) for more than 17 years. The republican economy and culture underwent a substantial change for the period. Quite a lot of funds were invested in the

Kalmyk economy—over two billion rubles—in 1961–1978. Along with industrial facilities, housing and cultural ones were built on quite an active basis.

The development of such industries as the building materials industry (concrete product plant, house building factory, sintering plant, silicate materials plant, etc.), the light industry (clothing and knitwear factories), and the food industry (canning factory, meat-packing works, meat-processing plant, bakery plant, and dairy plant in Elista) was accelerated. Such industries as the oil and gas extracting industry (the entire raw oil and gas were imported from the republic) and the machine-building industry (assembly of specialized machines out of finished parts using man power only) came into being during the same period. To be sure, the development of the new industries was advantageous for the republic because additional employment was provided, and infrastructure in the villages and settlements where the branches were developing improved, along with changes in the social structure of the population. All this was essential for the party to ground the conclusions that the national problem was solved, actual inequality was over, industrial development of outskirts was achieved, and a homogeneous social community was formed.

However, under the conditions of over-centralized management, planned economy, and regional specialization, the Kalmyk economy's development was one-sided and badly balanced. Sheep breeding became prevalent, while the industry hardly included anything apart from the building industry, which operated because of the need for stock buildings and housing for cattle breeders, and for schools, hostels, etc. for their children. As compared to 1961, the cattle stock in the republic increased by 1.53 times and made up 3,454,100 head including 353,200 head of bovine animals (by 1.63 times as much) and 3,023 thousand head of sheep (by 1.5 times as much) by 1978. During the same period the cattle stock in the country increased from 133.1 million to 159.9 million head, that is, by 1.2 times while the sheep stock remained nearly the same (65.5 million and 66.7 million head). The number of horses in the republic grew from 13,100 to 18,400 head for the same period and the number of horses from 230,200 to 344,900 head (1980), while the number of camels reduced from 1,100 to 500 head.⁵⁶

In the absence of modern processing enterprises or enterprises manufacturing finished products, Kalmykia became a raw material supplying region with a large budget deficit. The republic annually procured a greater part of the agricultural products it produced in the form of raw materials to the state.

*Sovkhoz*es and *kolkhoz*es of the republic were the key producers of agricultural products. The number of *sovkhoz*es grew from 37 to 94 for the period and their fixed capital stock from 65 million rubles to 441.5 million, that is, by 6.8 times. The average fixed capital stock per *sovkhoz* increased from 1.75 million rubles to 4.7 million rubles. As for *kolkhoz*es, though their number fell from 25 down to 23, non-distributable assets in the capital stock increased from 1,163 thousand rubles to 7,078 thousand rubles. In spite of the growth in the material and technical base of *sovkhoz*es and *kolkhoz*es in the republic (the number of tractors increased from 3,164 to 5,987, the number of grain combine harvesters from 1,016 to 1,849, and trucks from 2,006 to 6,330), the prime cost of the key agricultural products increased substantially. The grain prime cost increased from 1960 to 1978 by 1.8 times in *kolkhoz*es and by 3.4 times in *sovkhoz*es; the wool prime cost increased by 2 times in *kolkhoz*es and by 2.7 times in *sovkhoz*es; the milk prime cost grew by 1.76 times in *kolkhoz*es and by 2.5 times in *sovkhoz*es; the eggs prime cost increased by 1.2 times in *kolkhoz*es and by 2.2 times in *sovkhoz*es; the meat prime cost doubled in *kolkhoz*es and grew by 2.6 times in *sovkhoz*es.⁵⁷

The production of the key types of agricultural products grew materially during that period: meat by 2.4 times, milk by 2.3 times, eggs by 2.6 times, and wool by almost 2 times. This growth was mainly due to the increase in the cattle stock and poultry breeding as well as a slight growth in their productivity. At the same time, the state procurement norms increased by almost the same amount. A greater part of the products yielded was procured in accordance with the state plan. In 1960, all households of the republic procured 13.9 thousand tons (in the slaughter weight) of meat, which was 74% of the yielded meat, and in 1978 30.9 thousand tons (68%), 30% and 28% of yielded milk, 54.4% and 63.4% of eggs, and 108% and 124% of wool, respectively, that is, even more than the volume of yielded wool (perhaps, due to purchases from the population). The republic yielded 1,785 thousand tons of grain and procured 698.6 thousand tons of grain (39%) for the period.⁵⁸ It was not advantageous for the republic to give its agricultural products to the state in the form of raw materials and the population lacked milk, eggs, meat, and sausage goods.

The newly built meat processing factories were mainly intended for butchering as well as cooling and temporary storage of meat. No rawhide, wool flour, and cereals processing enterprises were built. Transportation and road network were mainly developed for ensuring the timely dispatching of the products to the state.

The total grain yield in the republic was low (8–9 *centners* from 1 hectare) and growth in the gross yield of the grain was achieved at the expense of expanding the planted areas (they increased from 617.8 thousand hectares in 1960 to 841 thousand hectares in 1979, that is, by 1.36 times) and irrigated areas (by almost five times), which caused a detrimental environmental impact—erosion, soil salinization, and decrease in the territory of pasture grounds (this, in its turn, intensified the load).

The growth in the agricultural production was ensured during the period at the expense of the increase in the labor force as well. While 37.3 thousand persons were engaged in production activities in *kolkhozes* and *sovkhozes* of the republic in 1960, in 1979 this figure amounted to as many as 49.9 thousand persons, that is, 1.34 times as much. To tell the truth, the population of the republic grew for the 20-year period from 184,900 to 293,528 persons (i.e., by 1.6 times) including Kalmyks—from 64,900 to 122,757 persons (their share in the republican population increased from 35.1% to 41.7%). The numerical strength of Russians in the republican population increased from 103,300 to 125,510 persons, but their share reduced from 55.9% to 42.6%.⁵⁹

In spite of the conclusion about the liquidation of actual inequality among the peoples of the country made by the party, the deportation of Kalmyks and prohibition for them to study at higher and specialized secondary schools had a great impact on the educational level of the Kalmyk population. As early as in 1979 Kalmykia lagged behind the average level in the RSFSR by the key educational indices per 1,000 persons aged 10 and older. The educational level in Kalmykia per 1,000 persons aged 10 and older was as follows: higher and secondary (senior and junior) education—589 persons (in the RSFSR—645 persons) including 49 persons with higher education (71 persons in the RSFSR), 97 persons with specialized secondary education (116 persons in the RSFSR), and 292 persons with elementary education (239 persons in the RSFSR). That is why the level of education and employed population in Kalmykia was lower than that in the RSFSR. The educational level in Kalmykia per 1,000 of the employed persons was as follows: higher and secondary (senior and junior) education—727 persons (803 persons in the RSFSR) including 74 with higher education (101 persons in the RSFSR), 143 persons with specialized secondary education (164 persons in the RSFSR), and 214 persons with elementary education (167 persons in the RSFSR).⁶⁰

The personnel having higher and specialized education were trained at an accelerated rate during those years. Hundreds of young men and women entered different education institutions of the country. The Peda-

gical Institute was opened in Elista in 1964 and was transformed into a university in 1970. There were seven specialized secondary schools in the republic, where over 7,000 students studied by the late 1970s. The number of pupils in general education schools of all types doubled. In the 1979–1980 academic year as many as 61,200 children went to 266 schools of the republic and over 4,000 teachers taught them (most of them had higher education).⁶¹

The training of highly skilled personnel played a positive role for the development of health care and culture in the republic. As compared to 1960, the number of doctors of different specialties increased by 3.8 times by 1978 when 938 persons were working in 83 hospitals, and the number of paramedics tripled to make up 3,194 persons. At the same time, in spite of the increased attention paid to training medical personnel, the republic lagged behind the average Russian level by many indices characterizing the medical care for the population. In late 1978, there were 31.5 doctors in Kalmykia (40.4 doctors in the RSFSR) and 107.3 paramedics (114 paramedics in the RSFSR) per 10,000 persons of the population. The number of hospital beds in the republic increased by 2.4 times during the period and amounted to 142.1 beds per 1,000 persons, which matched the average index in Russia.⁶²

Clubs (there were 154 clubs in 1960 and 277 clubs in 1978) and public libraries in towns and villages (150 and 189 libraries, respectively) were built at an accelerated rate, and cinema projectors were put into operation (their number grew from 183 to 351). The stock of books and journals in libraries increased by 3.4 times. On average, one library of the republic had 14–14.5 thousand copies of publications, while Russian libraries had up to 150 thousand copies of books in their reserves.⁶³ However, if we compare these figures with those as of the date of the autonomy reconstruction, it is clear that it was an evident turn for the better by the late 1970s. At the same time, Kalmykia ranked nearly last by many parameters characterizing the quantitative and qualitative development of the republic. The reason for this was not only the liquidation of the republic and deportation of its people, but the fact that it was made a cattle-breeding region yielding raw materials only.

In spite of significant differences in the levels of development in different parts of the country and differences between the theory and practice, the KPSS brought the qualitative characteristics of state authorities in accordance with its slogan proclaiming the building of developed socialism. Strict control on the part of party organs over the preparation and holding of elections and full management of the election campaigns ex-

cluded any free elections, which would reflect the actual social moods and the real structure and social condition of the society, as well as any democratic elements at elections of soviets of all levels. The party formed the soviets as people's power organs by manner but as mechanisms for implementing its own goals and securing its dictatorship by matter. That is why elections of soviets, which were supposed to be a display of the most important form of democracy and democratization of the society, turned into routine measures taken by party organs to demonstrate their "achievements" in all aspects including the national problem.

Taking such an approach to elections, party organs insisted on high voter turnout and good voting results. The election of local soviets of the republic held in 1961 was not an exception to all of the previous and future elections. The voter turnout at the election to the Elista municipal soviet made up 99.98% and voting results were 99.41%, at the election to district soviets 99.99% and 99.41%, respectively; at the election to village soviets 99.99% and 99.35%; and at the election to settlement soviets 100% and 99.33%.⁶⁴

As compared to the previous convocation, the amount of delegates to local soviets of the republic in 1961 increased by 160 persons to make up 2,230 delegates including 816 women (36.6%), and their membership was updated by 61.5% (1,373 persons). The share of party members in local soviets of the republic was accurately adjusted with the total mean index in local soviets in the entire country (45.3%).

There were 34% of workers in local soviets of the republic and 20% of *kolkhoz* peasants (though the share of workers in the social structure of the population was 51% and that of *kolkhoz* peasants amounted to 29.5%). Due to the fact that not all of the Kalmyks returned to the republic, the national structure of delegates of local soviets reflected the current national ratio of the republican population. In 1961 as many as 958 Kalmyks (42.9%) and 1,117 Russians (50.1%) were elected as members of local soviets.

There were 1.5 times less teachers, doctors, and scientists in local soviets of the Kalmyk ASSR (229 persons or 10.2%) than party, soviet, and Komsomol officials (334 persons or 15%). The educational level of delegates of local republican soviets mainly matched the actual educational level of the village population. There were 220 persons (9.8% as compared to 12.8% in the entire country) with higher education among members of local Kalmyk soviets, 526 persons (23.6% as compared to 29.5% in the entire country) with secondary education, 653 persons (29.1% as compared to 29.5% in the entire country) with incomplete secondary edu-

cation, and 831 persons (37.2% as compared to 31% in the entire country) with elementary education.⁶⁵

Before the authorities had time to complete and summarize the election to local soviets held in 1961, they launched a campaign to prepare the regular election of members to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in early 1962. Decrees issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on the preparation and holding of the election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in the territory of the republic followed the decrees issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet about scheduling the election for March 18, 1962 and forming election districts (there were 11 election districts for the election to the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, and one election district for the election to the Soviet of the Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in the territory of the Kalmyk ASSR).

The decrees issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on January 22–23, 1962 approved of the membership of two republican and 11 district commissions for the election to the Soviet of Nationalities and the Soviet of the Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, headed by secretaries and members of bureaus of the *oblast*, and municipal and district committees of the KPSS.⁶⁶

The campaign aimed at the nomination of candidate members of the Soviet of Nationalities and the Soviet of the Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, was launched on February 3–10, 1962. All candidates were selected and carefully examined by party organs of all levels in accordance with the predefined description (nationality, sex, party membership, age, social position, profession, etc.). The party organizations having selected a candidate in accordance with the suggested criteria and agreed this with necessary authorities organized formal nomination of the candidate member at general meetings of enterprises and organizations. The Central Committee of the KPSS or *oblast* party committees selected most of their candidate members and suggested them for nomination. It was this way in practice, although the Regulations on the election and other official documents provided for free nomination and discussion of candidate members.

All of the candidate members nominated from the Kalmyk ASSR to the Soviet of Nationalities and the Soviet of the Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, without any alternative candidates, were registered with district election committees in their respective election districts on February 12–14, 1962. Then the candidate members were elected as members for sure unless any extraordinary circumstances prevented this.

The turnout of voters in the Kalmyk ASSR at the election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR held on March 18, 1962 made up 99.99% (118,660 voters out of 118,662 received their voting papers). As many as 12 persons including two all-Union level officials representing the Kalmyk Republic—Public Health Minister of the USSR S.V. Kurashov and executive secretary of the Soviet of Ministers of the USSR G.S. Stepanov—were elected as members of the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet USSR, from the Kalmyk ASSR and members of the Soviet of the Union, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, in Kalmyk election district No. 403. Five members (41.6%) belonged to officials of the Central Committee of the KPSS by their positions. The group of delegates from the Kalmyk ASSR in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR comprised mainly Communists (75%) and only two persons were independent. Only S.V. Kurashov was reelected as a member of the Soviet of Nationalities, the Supreme Soviet USSR, from Kalmykia.

The number of Kalmyk members in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was regulated in 1959. Since then, the Central Committee of the KPSS recommended individual candidate members to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to ensure its presence in the authority and control the supreme state authority of the country.

Kalmykia always had 88 seats in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in 1959–1989. Out of this number 16 were allocated for members and candidate members of the Central Committee of the KPSS, as recommended by the Central Committee of the KPSS itself. The seat in the Soviet of the Union at the Supreme Soviet of the USSR would always be given to a resident of Kalmykia, but the latter would normally be selected among high-ranking party or state officials. Delegates represented Kalmykia and its interests in the supreme legislative body of the country only formally. First of all, delegates of all levels never participated in the lawmaking process except for the stage of voting. Delegates could discuss any issues only based on a schedule and in turn, and deliver only prearranged and approved speeches. Second, though the members' mandates were imperative by their nature, the institution of instructions of voters and reports on their implementation by the members were only formal (voters' suggestions could be accepted as instructions only if they matched the planned targets).

In 1962–1963, the party made a regular attempt to find an optimum form of economic management and change in part the current local government system based on the "industrial principle" by subjecting it to substantial reduction and consolidating village districts. This coincided with

the emergence of 70 new administrative *oblasts* in the RSFSR with soviets of people's economy (*sovnarkhozes*) as their administrative bodies. Kalmykia was made a part of the Privolzhsky *sovnarkhoz*. The formation of *sovnarkhozes* deepened the chaos in the field of management and made it more complicated because such authorities as the State Planning Committee (Gosplan), the State Committee for Procurement (Gossnab), and the State Construction Committee (Gosstroy), as well as branch ministries and state committees were preserved.

The reorganization of the local government based on the "industrial principle" and consolidation of districts in the Kalmyk ASSR was implemented in accordance with the decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on February 1, 1963 and a decree issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Kalmykia on February 11, 1963. According to the decrees, the following six village districts were formed instead of 11:

1. Gorodovikovsky (comprising 11 village soviets and one settlement soviet: four village soviets and one settlement soviet of the former Gorodovikovsky district and seven village soviets of the former Yashaltinsky district).

2. Priozernyi (comprising nine village soviets of the former Priozernyi district, five village soviets of the former Tselinnyi district, and one village soviet of the former Yashkulsky district).

3. Sarpinsky (comprising seven village and three settlement soviets).

4. Chernozemelsky (comprising 13 village soviets and one settlement soviet of the former Chernozemelsky district, four village soviets of the former Kaspiisky district, and three village soviets of the former Yashkulsky district).

5. Tselinnyi (comprising eight village soviets: two village soviets of the former Tselinnyi district, two village soviets of the former Tsentralnyi district, and one village soviet of the former Yashkulsky district).

6. Yustinsky (comprising nine village soviets: six village soviets of the former Yustinsky district, two village soviets of the former Priozernyi district, and one village soviet of the former Yashkulsky district).

Village district executive committees and district agricultural industrial party committees were in charge of the control over districts. However, under conditions of the centralized administration system it was impossible to change the economic management without changes in the local administrative control. As a result, *sovnarkhozes* were abolished in 1965 and the country returned to the industrial administration system ensuring the social and economic development of administrative and territorial entities.

New local administrative and *kray's* government bodies based on the "industrial principle" were formed in March 1963 along with supreme authorities of the RSFSR and Kalmyk ASSR. The preparation for the election and key stages of the electoral process (nomination) was completed in 29 or 30 days: from January 10 to February 9, 1963.

Though it was absolutely clear that the candidate members nominated for soviets of all levels would be elected for sure (because voters always obediently voted for the approved candidates), broad-scale agitation and propagandist activities with the participation of a great number of agitators and lecturers were carried out for almost three weeks. Republican and district mass media wrote about the candidates at every turn against the background of propaganda of the party ideas, achievements of the country and republic, and praise for social democracy and Soviet national policy. However, everybody could see that things were not that good in practice. That is why the adjustment of the Supreme Soviet and local soviets members' characteristics in accordance with different production indices had no effect on the voter turnout and voting results. The same was true about the election held on March 3, 1963.

There were 40 women (37.4%) and 70 party members (65.4%) among delegates in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of the third convocation. A lot of republican party, Soviet, Komsomol, and trade union officials (34 persons or 31.7%) obtained seats in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, while teachers, doctors, and scientists obtained only eight seats (7.4%). The national membership of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was well balanced (52 Kalmyks and 52 Russians). Delegates of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of the third convocation lagged behind delegates of the Supreme Soviets of other autonomous republics by their educational level. There were only 318 delegates with higher education in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, while the same figure in the Supreme Soviets of other autonomous republics made up 48.9%; there were twice as many delegates with elementary education in the Kalmyk Supreme Soviet (27.1%) than in Supreme Soviets of other ASSRs (14%). While there were 5.7% delegates with academic degrees in the Supreme Soviets of other ASSRs, this index was 1.8% in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR.⁶⁷

Erenzhen Agildzhanovich Sangayev, a member of the *oblast* party committee's bureau of the KPSS and Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet (Kalmyk ASSR), was elected as a delegate to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR in Kalmyk election district No. 798 on March 3, 1963.

The number of delegates in local soviets of the republic increased by 376 persons as compared to the previous convocation to make up 2,606 delegates including 1,029 women (39.5%), 1,140 Kalmyks (43.7%), and 1,303 Russians (50%). As many as 1,876 persons (72%) were elected as members of local soviets for the first time. The number of party and Soviet officials was twice as much as the number of doctors and teachers (12.4% and 10.1%, respectively). The party composition of local soviets' members remained practically the same (43.9%), and there were 234 persons with higher education (8.9%), 624 persons with secondary education, (24%) and 938 persons with elementary education (36%). At the same time, these indices were somewhat lower than in the country on average (13.4%, 28% and 27.5%, respectively).⁶⁸

In spite of the reorganization of the administrative and territorial system and local government bodies, the forms and methods of soviets' formation, as well as participation of the population in their organization and activities underwent no principal changes. The reversal to common *kray* and *oblast* soviets in late 1964 and early 1965, subdivision of districts and reconstruction of their authorities, and approval of a number of special decrees issued by the Central committee of the KPSS failed to ensure the expected results. It was the party that was improving its forms and methods of forming soviets by adjusting them in accordance with its conclusions about the further development of social relations based on the internal democratic fundamentals characteristic of socialism.

After the reorganization of districts and district soviets of workers' delegates (decree entitled *On changes in the administrative and territorial division of the Kalmyk ASSR* issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on January 12, 1965), the first election to local soviets of the republic was held in March 1965. However, since the organization of elections, forms of population's participation in pre-election and election campaigns, and forms and methods of activities conducted by party organs of all level—from the Central Committee of the KPSS to party organizations in enterprises, institutions, etc.—did not undergo any deep or pivotal changes, it is possible to group the data on the six election campaigns to local soviets, as well as comparative data on the members' structure. This approach enables us to analyze data for a long-term period (1965–1976) and make corresponding conclusions.

During the so-called “developed socialism” period the social structure of the society, position of social layers of the population, and essence of the state did not undergo any principal changes. The society was democratized in word but not in deed: this was “slogan” democracy in practice. It

is natural that the principles and methods of forming state authorities, as well as their composition remained the same. Delegates from different layers of the population and different peoples selected by the party based on a number of preset criteria represented them in soviets of all levels only formally.

Before the new RSFSR Constitution of "developed socialism" was adopted, elections of delegates to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR and the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR were held three times in the territory of the republic (in 1967, 1971, and 1975) and Kalmyk members of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR were elected three times as well (in 1966, 1970, and 1974). During the election campaigns a huge number of agitation points where dozens of thousands of people worked on a voluntary basis and upon instruction of party organizations were opened. All of the events they carried out were formal by their nature and failed to arouse any interest in voters because voting results were predetermined.

During the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR held in 1966, 1970 and 1974 candidate members were nominated under orders of the Central Committee of the KPSS and based on preset criteria only. The Central Committee of the KPSS always secured three or four seats for Kalmykia in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. Out of 12 seats in both of the chambers of the USSR's Supreme Soviet, nine seats were always provided to party members, one seat to a VLKSM member, and two seats to independent members (teachers as a rule). Six or seven people out of 12 delegates of the USSR's Supreme Soviet (of each convocation) representing the Kalmyk ASSR in the country's supreme legislative organ lacked any experience of working for state authorities and did not have any professional education to be engaged in law-making activities. According to theoretical conclusions made by the party, such membership of the USSR's Supreme Soviet reflected the social structure of the so-called "developing Soviet society." In fact, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR was a kind of a puppet show directed and controlled by the Central Committee of the KPSS. In practice, delegates were not capable of representing interests of their regions. When they introduced any motion to the USSR's Supreme Soviet, they had to preliminarily coordinate it with party and state organs of all levels, in compliance with the plans of the country's economic and social development.

The two seats of Kalmykia in the RSFSR's Supreme Soviet in 1967, 1971, and 1975 were reserved for two high-ranking republican officials and bureau members of the *oblast* party committee (as a rule, second secretary of the *oblast* party committee, chairman of the government, or

chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR). Because key chiefs of all republics, *krais*, *oblasts*, and districts formed a part of the RSFSR's Supreme Soviet according to their official capacities, the supreme authority was an obedient tool in the hands of the Central Committee of the KPSS and practically its appendage.

Supreme governments of autonomous republics were staffed in a similar way to ensure the control of *oblast* party committees over them. Two thirds of all seats in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (of all convocations) were provided to party members (to make up from 70% to 72% of seats along with Komsomol members). Party, Soviet, and Komsomol officials and functionaries had many seats (from 36.5% to 40%), while teachers and doctors were provided with two or three seats only.

As many as 67–72% of members of the republican Supreme Soviet were elected for the first time for every new convocation, mainly at the expense of workers, *kolkhoz* laborers, and intelligentsia. High-ranking republican officials (secretaries, heads of departments in the Kalmyk *oblast* committee of the KPSS, first secretaries of the municipal and district committees of the KPSS, chairman of the republican Soviet of Ministers and his deputies, etc.) were to be delegates while holding their offices.

The *oblast* committee of the KPSS always regulated the criteria characterizing candidate delegates to the republican Supreme Soviet by their social status, sex, age, education, and other criteria in minute details and in accordance with the party's conclusions, regulations on the Soviet society and people. Special attention was paid to ensure a proper national ratio in the Supreme Soviet (as a rule, 58 Russians, 57 Kalmyks, and 10 representatives from other peoples). The share of women in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was always maintained at the level of 39–41%.

The same principles strictly regulated the process of forming the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the Soviet of Ministers in the republic. In connection with the industrial and cultural development, provision of certain independence in the field of solving local problems, administrative bureaucratization, and increase in the number of federal ministries and administrations, the membership of the government of the Kalmyk ASSR grew from 18 (in 1958) to 29 (in 1975) members at the expense of new ministries, state committees, and administrations, as well as introduction of new offices in the apparatus of the Soviet of Ministers.

As an autonomous state, the Kalmyk ASSR did not make an immediate part of the RSFSR under the Constitution of the RSFSR. That is why the supreme government of the Kalmyk ASSR forming a part of the common

vertical system of the RSFSR's government was subordinate to it. In fact, the Soviet of Ministers of the Kalmyk ASSR was accountable not only to the republican Supreme Soviet and its Presidium but also to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and its Presidium, as well as to the RSFSR's Soviet of Ministers. The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR was entitled to withdraw decrees and resolutions adopted by governments of autonomous republics and the RSFSR's Soviet of Ministers was entitled to suspend them. Moreover, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR could cancel or suspend decrees and resolutions adopted by the republican government.

In compliance with the nomenclature stipulated by the Central Committee of the KPSS, heads of party and state organs of republics, *krais*, *oblasts*, and cities were appointed in accordance with a special procedure and upon permission of the Central Committee. Local authorities could not settle such personnel issues independently. The Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR appointed chiefs of the republican government (chairman and vice chairmen) but only after the examination of candidates' curriculum vitae and interview with the organizational and other departments of the Central Committee of the KPSS. The Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR appointed ministers and heads of republican authorities upon coordination with respective federal ministries and administrations. Thus, republican ministries and administrations were in double subordination: they were subordinate to a corresponding ministry or administration at the vertical level and to the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet and the republic's Soviet of Ministers at the horizontal level. Moreover, they were subordinate to a corresponding *oblast* committee of the KPSS, which in fact exercised administrative but not ideological control over the republic.

Local personnel up to directors of *sovkhozes* and *kolkhoz* chairmen was appointed in accordance with a similar procedure but based on the nomenclature approved by the *oblast* party committee. Consequently, neither people nor labor collectives took part in elections of heads of local state and economic enterprises. Voters' participation in forming local soviets became just a formality and declared democracy.

The analysis of available historic sources on republican local soviets for the period of 1965–1975 shows that the organization of the government's and population's participation in this process did not undergo any principal changes. The data on the composition of local soviets, voting results, and pre-election campaigns do not demonstrate any actual changes in the forms and methods of activities carried out by party organs of all levels—from the Central Committee to party organizations of different

enterprises and institutions. The elections held during that period were characterized by certain slogans, for example, successful implementation of resolutions adopted by a regular party congress, five-year plans, socialist emulation objectives, etc., that is, they were transformed into a political campaign, school of mass political indoctrination, and ostentatious demonstration of socialist democracy. For these purposes, party organizations created agitation groups, opened agitation points, and launched broad-scale organizational, agitation, and propagandist activities in labor collectives and in residential areas.

The total number of local soviets and their members increased from 86 to 110 (by 22%) and from 3,123 to 3,902 (by 20%) during that period, respectively. This was presented as an expansion of the socialist democracy basis. The total number of voters grew by 20%, that is, from 130,250 to 163,940. Such figures as the voter turnout (99.9%) and number of votes for the candidates (99.96%) were kept on a high level and the party considered them to be the degree of voters' activity. The party always tried to confirm its conclusions and statements on the Soviet state development, democratization of all aspects of the Soviet society, its consolidation, and the as ever-increasing role of the Communist Party by carefully "adjusted" data characterizing the composition of local soviets and their members. Therefore, it is not accidental that the share of women in local soviets was continuously growing and the equal number of party members, Komsomol members, and independent members was strictly maintained. In spite of the availability of "staff" delegates on the basis of their positions, delegates were rotated mainly at the expense of workers and *kolkhoz* laborers.

When nominating candidate members, party organizations would provide the data on the share of workers in local soviets in order to substantiate the party's conclusion about the ever-increasing role of the working class in the country's economic and political life and in the social structure of the Soviet society. Similar measures were taken to confirm the role of *kolkhoz* peasants in developing the village-related sector of the people's economy, changes in the structure of the village population, etc.

The share of intelligentsia in local soviets was gradually reducing. In particular, this is evident by the number of seats provided to doctors and teachers (their share fell from 9.1% to 7.9%). At the same time, the share of officials in local soviets was steadily growing from 377 to 533 persons.

According to the Communist Party, the development of the Soviet society and its political system started a radically new stage in the second half of the 1970s that resulted in the need to adopt a new Constitution of

the USSR and upgrade the entire country's constitutional law. However, the political system and organization of power in the USSR underwent hardly any general and structural changes. The national problem was considered to be solved, legal and actual equality between all the peoples was reached, and no disagreements between peoples were expected. But in fact, as the subsequent events showed, national problems did exist and contradictions were accumulating.

In fact, the new constitutional legislation of 1977–1978 was declarative by nature and failed to reflect the actual situation in the society and state to a full degree. The USSR and RSFSR Constitutions recognized the statehood of both the USSR and even the autonomous republics formally. Having legislated the state status of autonomous republics (Article 82), the 1977 Constitution of the USSR defined in another article that autonomous republics are just “pebbles” on the “beach” of the state system of the USSR and the RSFSR. Being units of what was virtually a unitary state, autonomous republics were to promote “authorities of the USSR and union republics in their territories and to implement resolutions adopted by the supreme governments of the USSR and of the union republic.”

Chapter 8 of the RSFSR Constitution of 1978 was devoted to autonomous republics and reproduced the key provisions of Chapter 10, USSR Constitution, when defining their legal status, with the exception of the first paragraph of Article 78 reading that “an autonomous republic is a Soviet socialist state forming a part of the RSFSR.” The RSFSR Constitution defining the priority of federal laws all over the territory of the RSFSR failed to define the status of laws adopted by autonomous republics and related to issues of their exclusive competence.

Unlike the Constitution of the USSR, that of the RSFSR stipulated the status and powers of supreme government bodies in autonomous republics—the Supreme Soviet and the Soviet of Ministers—in a greater detail. Having defined the Supreme Soviet as the only legislative body of an autonomous republic, the Constitution entitled it with the right of legislative initiative with the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. The RSFSR Constitution stipulated the key powers and issues referred to the exclusive competence of the supreme government of an autonomous republic. At the same time, the RSFSR Constitution provided the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR with unlimited authorities: “it has other authorities stipulated by the Constitution and legislation of the RSFSR as well.” It is well known that the non-exhaustive list of powers is characteristic of a unitary state. Supreme Soviets of autonomous republics were entitled to finally adopt the republican Constitutions for the first time.

In spite of the availability of independent governments in autonomous republics stipulated by their constitutions, by the matter of their powers, methods of their implementation and character of mutual relations with federal (but in fact, central) authorities, they in fact acted as a unit of a common unitary state's government system. Regardless of what the constitutions said, it was impossible to avoid the unitary state because its key feature—the democratic centralism principle—formed a legal basis of the state organization and function (Article 3). Therefore, it is not accidental that the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR supervised over local soviets and was entitled to withdraw decrees and resolutions of the RSFSR government, as well as soviets of ministers of autonomous republics. The RSFSR government could suspend decrees and resolutions adopted by the Soviet of Ministers of autonomous republics.

The Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR was adopted on May 30, 1978 as a component part of the common constitutional legislation of the USSR. Constitutions of autonomous republics often could not be differentiated one from another except for republics' names because in fact they were copied out from the same standard document. Thus, following the theoretic conclusion of the party on the national state, constitutions of autonomous republics read that their "autonomous republic is a socialist national state expressing the will and interests of all members of the society."

According to the key principles of national relations stipulated by the USSR Constitution, the Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR defined the rights of the republic, scope of its competence, and body of economic, state, social, and cultural functions of its government in its territory.

The new constitutional legislation of the USSR paid much attention to the legal status of the autonomous republic. The 1978 constitutions of autonomous republics developed, supplemented and specified provisions of the USSR and RSFSR Constitutions. While the USSR Constitution defined the basis of the legal status of the autonomous republic and general principles of forming its authorities and government bodies and their activities, the autonomous republic Constitution defined the legal status, described the scope of competence, and regulated the procedures and forms of activities of the Supreme Soviet and its Presidium, as well as the Soviet of Ministers of the ASSR in great detail.

Though recognizing that the republic is a constituent member of the RSFSR, the Constitution at the same time legislated the unitary state principles and failed to define the joint authorities of central state authorities and the government of the autonomous republic. The strict vertical both in

the system of Soviets and the executive organs was legalized. In this connection, the Soviet of Ministers of the Kalmyk ASSR was entitled to withdraw decisions and resolutions adopted by the executive committees of local soviets, as well as acts passed by republican ministries, state committees, and other dependent organs.

Article 16 of the Kalmyk ASSR's Constitution said: "The economy of the Kalmyk ASSR forms a part of the economy of the RSFSR—a common national economic complex covering all units of public production, distribution and exchange in the territory of the USSR." A common system of planning and managing the country's social and economic life ensured this constitutional provision as it was accepted in a centralized state.

In spite of new constitutional provisions about the nationwide character of the state, as well as the development of socialism, democracy, socialist statehood, and the Constitution, they failed to make any changes of the system of state authorities and principles of their forming and activities, except for separate innovations in the electoral law and election system.

According to the new law of the USSR about the election to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted on July 6, 1978, attempts were made to democratize the election process by involving workers' and labor collectives to election commissions. Beginning with 1979, "common" workers recommended by the bureau of the *oblast* party committee presided over republican election commissions under supervision of the *oblast* party committee's secretary, who made a part of the commission as the vice chairman.

The election of delegates to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR (whose term of power was extended to make up five years) was held under such supervision in March 1979 and 1984. The election process during the elections was the same as during the previous elections held before the new constitutional law was adopted. Among the 12 delegates representing the Kalmyk ASSR in the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, there were officials from the Central Committee of the KPSS sent from Moscow upon instruction of the Central Committee of the KPSS, and most of them (eight or nine persons) were members of the Communist Party.

Kalmyk delegates to the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR were still selected based on the general scheme of its staffing. In 1980 and 1985, two high-ranking republican officials—chairman of the government and chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet—were "elected" as delegates from Kalmykia. Two seats in the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR were permanently reserved for them. As for the chairman of the Presidium

of the Supreme Soviet of Kalmykia, according to the new Constitution he was to be a member of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR because he was made a part of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet RSFSR as a vice-chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR based on his position.

The new Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR of 1978 defined the procedure for forming the supreme government authority of the republic in a greater detail than before. First of all, the term of powers of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was extended from four to five years. The age qualification for the persons who could be elected to the republican Supreme Soviet was decreased from 21 to 18 years.

The 1978 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR as well as the previous constitution failed to stipulate the norm of delegates representing the republican population. Article 93 defined the exact number of delegates in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR—130 persons to be elected by election districts with the equal population. According to the republican law entitled *On the Election to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR* and the 1978 Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR, labor collectives along with public organizations were entitled to nominate candidate members. In spite of the pretence of the democratic election system, party organizations from different enterprises and institutions were in charge of supervising over the candidates' nomination and holding of the elections. Residents of the republic were entitled to take part in the preparation and holding of elections only through public organizations or labor collectives.

The body of delegates elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR in compliance with the new Constitution in 1980 and 1985 was not different from that formed during the previous elections either by election technology or membership. Just like before, Communists, Komsomol members, and officials dominated in the organ. The share of women in the republican Supreme Soviet was maintained at the level of 41.5–41.6%. Due to the party's conclusion about the qualitative change in the social structure of the Soviet society, convergence between all classes and social layers, and leading role of the working class, the share of workers was gradually increased (from 34.7% to 42.3%) and that of *kolkhoz* laborers was decreased (from 16.1 to 9.2%). The educational level of delegates of the republican Supreme Soviet mainly matched the educational level of the population.

Out of 130 delegates of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (the last but one convocation—1985) as many as 12 persons had academic degrees and only one of them (university rector) represented science. The

remaining 11 persons belonged to high-ranking officials from party and state authorities and obtained their academic degrees in a “marvelous” way.

The republican party organization strictly regulated the process of rotating delegates of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (two thirds of the composition were changed on a permanent basis), reserved most seats for itself and ensured representation of its chiefs (secretaries, heads of departments of *oblast* party committees, first secretaries of the municipal party committee, and district party committees of the KPSS). This enabled the Central Committee of the KPSS and the *oblast* committee of the KPSS to control and supervise over state authorities without any problems.

During the period from the adoption of the USSR Constitution in 1977 to the collapse of the Soviet Union, six elections of people's delegates to local soviets were held (four convocations based on the previous technology and two latest convocations—under conditions of the so-called *perestroika*) both in Kalmykia and whole country.

The first attempts to democratize the election system were made in the republic in 1987. On March 26, 1987, in compliance with the resolution entitled *On holding the election to local Soviets of people's delegates of the RSFSR based on multi-seat election districts on a pilot basis* issued by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR on February 26, 1987, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR resolved to hold the election based on multi-seat election districts in the Maloderbetovskiy district on a pilot basis (instead of 75 one-seat districts, as many as 22 multi-seat ones were formed).

Labor collectives discussed the business and moral qualities of the suggested candidates more thoroughly. It was for the first time when labor collectives rejected 32 candidates in 1987, and as many as 27 executives from republican villages and settlements failed to meet support at pre-election meetings and gatherings and were not nominated as candidate members.

The year of 1990 is distinguished by the fact that the party lost its governing role and more democratic elections were launched. The law of the USSR *About the Election of People's Delegates of the USSR*, which affected the election campaign to soviets of all levels, was adopted on December 1, 1988. In 1990 during the pre-election campaign as many as 4,529 candidates were nominated for 2,939 seats in local soviets, that is, 1.5 persons per seat (two candidates were nominated in 490 election districts and three candidates or more were nominated in 191 election districts); 366 persons were not registered with election district commissions.

As many as 225 persons were nominated as candidates for the residence of their voters for the first time.

In spite of the inertness and habit of Soviet voters to take part in voting “on an active basis,” the voter turnout fell down to 85.83% and share of voters voting for the delegates reduced from the customary level of 99.9% to 75.4%.

The share of women, workers, and *kolkhoz* laborers among 2,939 delegates of local soviets remained at the same level. At the same time, even more Communists, officials, and functionaries of party and Soviet organs were elected than before. This can be explained not only by the customary attitude to party members and officials from the state apparatus on the part of Soviet voters, but also by the fact that delegates belonging to the category aimed at preserving their offices. That is why most of the delegates elected for the second time (47.8%) belonged to this group.

The *oblast* party organization kept increasing the number of its members in the 1970s and 1980s. The number of Communists increased by 33.7% in 1976–1988 and made up 17,276 persons. During that period more young activists of Komsomol and trade union organizations became members of the *oblast* party organization. Thus, 2,402 VLKSM members joined the party in 1981–1986 (44.3% of the total number of persons joining the KPSS). We think that such a technique of recruiting new party members made it possible to replenish the “old party guard” with young people of the Komsomol age by ensuring their further career promotion. That is why the republican party organization became a self-contained and corporative nomenclature body reflecting the current processes in the party life of the country. As a result, the Communist Party and its local organization collapsed immediately without any support from the people and no one seemed to notice it.

However, our society is still facing the consequences of the corporate nomenclature body’s operation. Many heads of towns, districts, economies, and state authorities used to be chiefs of departments, instructors from the municipal committee, district committees, and even *oblast* committee of the KPSS, as well as secretaries of party committees in *sovkhozes*, *kolkhozes*, enterprises, and organizations. While the former functionaries are retiring now, young people will remain here for 15 or 20 years. And only then the new generation brought up under market conditions, democracy, and legal state will come to power.

By the late 1970s and early 1980s, the republic obtained enough funding and its economy began developing. While the republican planted area including grain crops was increasingly growing until 1981 (861.9 thou-

sand hectares including 471.6 thousand hectares of grain crops), it experienced a downfall beginning with 1982 (849.4 thousand hectares including 443 thousand hectares of grain crops) and the planted area made up 712.6 thousand hectares by 1991 (reduced by 17.4%) including 414.8 thousand hectares of grain crops (decreased by 6.4%). At the same time, the volume of mineral and organic fertilizers provided to agricultural enterprises as well as supply of oil products were decreasing. In the middle of the 1980s, the average annual grain gross yield decreased from 596 thousand tons to 430.2 thousand tons (by 17.8%) for a five-year term (1981–1985) as compared to the previous five-year term (1976–1980). However, the average annual grain procurement plans were growing: from 28.6% in 1976–1980 to 35% in 1980–1985. The average annual gross grain yield amounted to 605.4 thousand tons under favorable weather conditions.⁶⁹

The same trends were characteristic of the republican cattle breeding development. The Kalmyk cattle stock was continuously growing since 1979 and reached the absolute maximum in 1984 with 3,930,400 head (as compared to 1979 the cattle stock increased by 13.8% while the same figure in the whole country amounted to 2.1%). However, the decline in the cattle count began both in the republic and country at large then. As early as in 1985 the cattle stock decreased by 2% both in the republic and whole country as compared to the previous year. In spite of the steady decline in the cattle stock (only 3,591,300 head was in 1990), the slaughter rate was growing every year—from 40.1 thousand tons in 1980 to 55.8 thousand tons in 1990, that is, the cattle stock decreased and the slaughter rate increased for the same period by 39.1% (by 36.5% in the entire country). Cattle and poultry state procurement plans increased by almost the same figure—by 36.7%.

The sheep stock reduced from 3,429,800 head in 1984 down to 3,151,900 head in 1990, that is, by 8.1% (by 7.6% in the whole country) during that period. As compared to the previous five-year term, the republican wool production in 1986–1990 decreased from 17.2 thousand tons to 13.1 thousand tons, that is, by 23.9% (it increased in the whole country by 2%). In spite of the increase in expenses, the prime cost of such agricultural products as grain, meat, milk, eggs, melons and gourds, wool, etc. was growing fast. By the late 1980s, it almost doubled as compared to the beginning of the decade. The very first signs of the crisis in the republican agriculture could be seen, that is, the republic shared the general crisis with the total country. The republic had no time to produce goods and started eating away what it had.

The republican industry was in a better condition as compared to the agriculture. The number of industrial enterprises increased from 85 to 97 and

the production volume more than doubled for a ten-year period (1980–1990). However, the quality characteristics of the industry aggravated: the profitability of enterprises was low, the prime cost of the manufactured production was high, and expenses per one ruble of the product cost were also high (they increased by 2.6 times for the aforesaid ten-year period).

The KPSS had to recognize that the problems in all spheres of the Soviet society were growing and radical measures were to be taken to hold the country's slipping to the crisis in the economic, politic, social, and spiritual fields. The party forums held in April 1985 and February 1986 reported on the substantial decrease in the economy and labor capacity growth rates, deceleration of the scientific and technical progress, intensification of disproportions in the economy, and aggravation of some economy efficiency indices. It was mentioned for the first time: "Our achievements in the relations between nationalities must not induce an idea that there are no problems in this field."

Notes

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- 2 Ibid. D. 1831. L. 132, 152; D. 1910. L. 1, 3, 15, 17, 26, 41, 118–1344; D. 1938. L. 41, 78.
- 3 Ibid. D. 1938. L. 75; D. 1972. L. 130–134; Lenin's path, 1936. March 4.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 *National and state building in the Kalmyk ASSR (July 1920–June 1937): Collected documents and materials*. Elista, 1981. 311.
- 6 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. R-3. Op. 2. D. 2164. L. 7; D. 2173. L. 7–9; Op. 10 p. D. 177. L. 5.
- 7 *USSR: Administrative and territorial division of the USSR republics*. Moscow, 1938. 129.
- 8 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. R-3. Op. 10 p. D. 177. L. 7.
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- 10 *Kalmyk ASSR: Collected articles*. Elista, 1938. 30.
- 11 S.B. Badmayev. Op. cit., 28; *Kalmyk ASSR. Collected articles*. Elista, 1939. 20.
- 12 *Kalmyk ASSR: Collected articles*. 25, 44.
- 13 Ibid. 49, 55, 57.
- 14 Ibid. 50–51.
- 15 *National and state building in the Kalmyk ASSR*. 326, 327.
- 16 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. R-2. Op. 1. D. 28. L. 7, 53, 56, 62; D. 138. L. 2, 10; D. 119. L. 65–68.

- 17 *Voting results at the election of workers' members of local Soviets in the RSFSR held on December 24, 1939: Collected statistics*. Moscow, 1940.
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- 21 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. P-1. Op. 3. D. 522. L. 6; D. 506. L. 2; D. 544. L. 15; D. 559. L. 7.
- 22 Ibid. D. 521. L. 12; D. 588. L. 6, 28; D. 599. L. 2, 3.
- 23 U.B. Ochirov. Op. cit., 57, 58.
- 24 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. P-1. Op. 3. D. 570. L. 12; D. 734. L. 7, 16; D. 586. L. 4; D. 734. L. 10, 11.
- 25 Ibid. D. 575. L. 2–3; F. R-131. Op. 1. D. 885-a. L. 74, 75, 118, 120; D. 942. L. 23, 24; D. 1128. L. 71.
- 26 Ibid. F. P-1. Op. 3. D. 734. L. 26.
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- 28 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. P-1. Op. 3. D. 734. L. 4, 73, 74; D. 584. L. 11, 12, 17.
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- 37 Ibid. Vol. 1. Book 1. 6, 9, 22–25.
- 38 Ibid. 25–28.
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- 41 *The Kalmyk exile*. Vol. 1. Book 1. 123; Book 2. 145.
- 42 Ibid. Book 2. 73, 479.
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- 47 *Essays on the history of the Kalmyk ASSR*. 353.

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- 52 *Sovetskaya Kalmykia*. 1959. January 14, 15, and 18.
- 53 *National archives of the Kalmyk Republic*. F. R-1. Op. 4. D. 105; D. 109. L. 1–4.
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- 60 *Number and composition of the USSR population: according to the 1979 All-Union population census*. Moscow, 1985. 42, 63.
- 61 *Economic and social development...* 156, 158.
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- 68 *Ibid.* D. 180. L. 4–9; *Sovetskaya Kalmykia Newspaper*. 1963. March 8 and 9.
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CHAPTER 6

Kalmykia Within the New Russian Federal System

As the crisis of the Soviet system aggravated, social and interethnic controversies also intensified. In the late 1980s, the CPSU made some attempts to address these disturbing processes. Having discussed the issues related to interethnic relations, the 19th party conference, which was held on June 28–July 1, 1988, drafted an action program in this sphere. The conference's resolution read in particular that "the achievements in solving the national question were perceived [in the USSR] as absolute and the national relations were regarded as unproblematic. The needs of particular national republics and autonomous entities [republics, *oblasts*, and districts] as well as specific ethnic groups for social, economic, and cultural development were not properly addressed. A number of urgent issues brought about by the very process of development of the national and ethnic groups were not resolved in due time. This would lead to dissatisfaction that often brought about conflicts." It was acknowledged that "the undesirable phenomena that had accumulated over decades were consistently ignored and neglected."

Further the action plan was described. As a part of the *perestroika* of the entire political system, it was proposed that measures be taken in order to develop and consolidate the Soviet federation based on democratic principles, expanded rights of the union republics and autonomous entities, decentralization of the government functions, and improvement of inter-budget relations. The establishment of a special state agency for regulating national issues and interethnic relations was considered.¹

By the time in question (1987), a department for national relations (chaired by Doctor of History V. Mikhailov) had already been incorporated in the CPSU Central Committee apparatus. In February 1992, a Russian Federation State Committee for National Policy was established, chaired by Doctor of History V. Tishkov. In general the program was ori-

ented towards the development and simultaneous preservation of the federation.

Issues related to the national policy and relations between national groups were discussed at the CPSU Central Committee's plenary session in September 1989. Having analyzed the state of interethnic relations, the plenary session summarized the negative aspects of the situation, namely with regard to the preservation of the national distinctive character, development of national languages, cultures, traditions, the social structures within national republics, and federalist principles. Serious consideration was given to the autonomous entities' development as an integral part of the perestroika of the Soviet Federation. The major goal was to restore the full rights and address legitimate interests of the peoples constituting the autonomous entities.

It was concluded that appropriate actions would be:

- to update the constitutional and other legislative acts concerning autonomous republics, autonomous *oblasts*, and districts;
- to take into consideration the legal essence of the autonomous republics as Soviet socialist states and to expand their competences considerably. They should have the authority to resolve all issues pertinent to the administrative and territorial divisions, environmental protection, development of their national cultures and languages, and preservation of historical sites on their territories;
- to strengthen the economic independence of the autonomous republics through introducing self-sustaining and self-financing modes of economic operation, and defining the forms of the participation of enterprises and companies under the central and republican subordination in the formation of the local budget;
- to authorize the governing bodies of the autonomous republics to appeal against decisions by the central government of the USSR and the Soviet republics if these decisions contravene the USSR's or Soviet republics' competences stipulated in the Constitution;
- to enhance the status of the autonomous *oblasts* and districts by authorizing them to put forward legislative initiatives in the highest governing bodies of the USSR and the Soviet republics, as well as to have their own representation not only in the USSR Supreme Soviet, but also in supreme soviets of the union republics and in the soviets of people's representatives of the corresponding *krais* and *oblasts*;
- to stipulate that the administrative bodies of the autonomous districts can directly appeal to the union ministries and to the union re-

public's authorities, as well as to introduce the practice when decisions of the district legislative assembly can be cancelled only by the Supreme Soviet of the union republic, having specified that the territory of an autonomous republic or district shall not be changed without their consent;

- to consider the question of a possibility and procedure for autonomous republics of the Russian Federation to be transferred under the direct control of the national authorities of the Russian Federation if there is such a will on the part of the population;
- to ensure unfailing consideration of the relations not only between the national and state entities within the (Soviet) Union but also between various national and ethnic groups within the union republics and *oblasts*;
- to secure all rights and conditions for the preservation of national traditions, cultural and linguistic development of those citizens that reside outside their respective national territorial entities, or if such entities are not available in the USSR, as well as to ensure their representation in the authorities. Based on available experience, continue the practice of establishing national cultural centers, societies, and organizations. They would be operating under the control of and supported by respective soviets of people's representatives and have their representatives in these soviets;
- by consent of the Supreme Soviets of the republics, *kray* and *oblast* legislative assemblies, national district, town, and village soviets shall be established in the places of compact residence of those national communities that do not have their national territorial entities; the right of such communities and groups to self-government shall be specified in the law;
- to make provisions for the possibility to establish national state and non-government agencies for the purpose of representation of those national groups that do not have their own autonomous territories;
- for the purpose of developing contacts between national minorities and other states' citizens with the same ethnic origin and cultural heritage, the legislation shall envisage the right of the national cultural centers and non-government organizations to maintain cultural contacts with similar cultural and educational organizations in respective countries, both through the Union of Soviet Societies for Cultural Contacts with foreign organizations and directly.”²

Soon practical steps started to be taken in order to implement the program. The following all-union laws were passed: *On local economic man-*

agement and self-government, On the languages of the peoples of the USSR, On distribution of powers between the USSR and constituent members of the Russian Federation, On the unhindered national development of the citizens of the USSR residing outside of their national state units or those that do not have national units on the territory of the USSR, and others. In accordance with the union law *On distribution of powers between the USSR and constituent members of the Russian Federation* of April, 26, 1990, the legal status of an autonomous republic and its authorities was considerably enhanced. It was the first occasion when the autonomous republic had become an entity of the USSR. Now, based on agreements and treaties, it had been authorized to determine its relation to the union republic whose constituent it was. This law legitimized autonomous republics' declarations of state sovereignty.

An attempt was made to transform and update the political system of the Soviet society, including the state authorities. To this effect, the union laws on amendments and supplements to the Constitution of the USSR and on the elections of people's representatives of the USSR were passed in December 1988.³ Under these laws, the structure of the soviets was transformed, improvements were made in the principles and procedure of the soviets' formation, as well as in the operation of the highest state authorities and election committee. The law on the amendments and supplements to the Constitution of the USSR envisaged a new system of representative and legislative bodies and its constituents. The congress of the people's representatives of the USSR became this system's highest constituent on the union's territory, while the congress of the people's representatives of the union republic and the congress of people's representatives of the autonomous republics assumed corresponding functions respectively on the territories of the Union Soviet Socialist Republics and autonomous soviet socialist republics. In the periods between the sittings of the congresses of people's representatives, the powers and functions of the highest state authority within a corresponding territorial entity would be exercised by the Supreme Soviets of the USSR, the SSR, or the ASSR, these soviets being permanent legislative, executive, and controlling bodies of state power within their corresponding territorial formations. The Supreme Soviet of the USSR was still made of two houses—the Soviet of the Union and the Soviet of the Nationalities—that were endowed with equal powers and consisted of equal numbers of representatives.

The elections of people's representatives held in March 1989 were carried out in compliance with the law of the USSR "On the elections of people's representatives of the USSR" of December 1, 1988. The total of

750 territorial and 750 national-territorial election districts were formed on the country's territory for the purpose of carrying out these elections. Two thirds out of 2,250 representatives that eventually constituted the assemblies in question were elected by all citizens of the USSR that achieved the age of 18 in the course of equal popular and—without a precedent in the Soviet history—alternative elections. One third of the Supreme Soviet's members represented all-union organizations and were elected by members of these organizations at their congresses, conferences, and plenary meetings. As we can see, having started the reform of the electoral system, the party was not consistent, having violated the electoral norms and democratic electoral principles in order to secure seats for its members in the country's highest authority by creating a "counter-balance" to the people's representatives elected in districts by direct alternative vote.

In accordance with Article 17 of the law of the USSR *On the elections of people's representatives of the USSR*, one territorial and 11 national-territorial election districts were established on the territory of the Kalmyk ASSR. It was for the first time in the history of the Soviet state that alternative elections (without the usual control on the part of the CPSU's Central Committee) to the highest national authority had been held in the republic. The total of 49 candidates from Kalmykia ran for the Soviet of Nationalities within the national-territorial districts, while one candidate ran for the Soviet of the Union within the territorial district. As a result of vote (the voter's turnout amounted to 93%, 88% having voted for the candidates), 12 representatives of the Kalmyk ASSR were elected to the highest body of state authority of the USSR (namely the Soviet of the Union and Soviet of Nationalities). All of them were members of the CPSU. There remained the same number of Kalmyk representatives in the CPSU's Central Committee—three persons.⁴

In accordance with the Law of the USSR on supplements and amendments to the Constitution of the USSR, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR passed the law of the RSFSR *On supplements and amendments to the Constitution of the RSFSR*. This law established a new system of state authorities of the RSFSR, namely the congress of people's representatives and the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, and stipulated their powers and competences, as well as the procedure for their formation.⁵

While in the period of 1937 through 1985 the supreme state authority of the RSFSR was formed based exclusively on the territorial principle, under the new legislation in force since 1990 it was to be formed of representatives of both territorial and national-territorial electoral districts.

Thus for the first time the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR acquired features of a federal body based on its formation principle. Article 105 of the Constitution of the RSFSR stipulated that the Congress of people's representatives of the RSFSR should consist of 1,068 persons elected in territorial electoral districts (900 persons) and in national-territorial districts (168), with four persons per each autonomous republic, two per each autonomous *oblasts*, one per an autonomous district, and 84 persons representing *krais*, *oblasts*, and the cities of Moscow and Leningrad.

The Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR remained a constituent of the system of the higher state authorities of the RSFSR. However, the status of this body was now considerably different from that of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR of previous convocations. Under the new legislation, the Soviet became a permanent legislative, executive, and controlling authority of the RSFSR accountable to its senior, that is, the Congress of people's representatives of the RSFSR. Besides, the new Supreme Soviet's structure and formation principles typical of a federal state authority were also different from those of its predecessors. The Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR consisted of two houses—Soviet of the Republic and Soviet of Nationalities—equal in their status and consisting of equal numbers of representatives. The Soviet of the Republic included people's representatives elected in the territorial electoral districts, while the Soviet of Nationalities consisted of those elected in the national-territorial electoral districts, with three persons representing each autonomous republic, one each autonomous *oblast* and each autonomous *okrug*, as well as 63 representatives of the *krais*, *oblasts*, and the cities of Moscow and Leningrad.

As in all of RSFSR, the elections of people's representatives were held in Kalmykia in early March of 1990, in compliance with the law of the RSFSR *On the elections of people's representatives of the RSFSR* of 27 October 1989. Under Article 16 of the law of the RSFSR on the elections of people's representatives, six electoral districts were formed in the Kalmyk ASSR for electing people's representatives of the RSFSR, including four national-territorial districts and two territorial districts.

For the first time, two rounds of elections were held in the six electoral districts of Kalmykia, on 4 and 17, March, 1990. The total of 25 candidates ran in the two territorial districts (for two seats in the federal assemblies), and 34 candidates competed in the four national-territorial districts (for four seats). As a result of the second round, K. Ilyumzhinov (supported by 64.1%) and Chairman of the Kalmyk State Planning Committee M. Mukubenov (48.8 %) were elected people's representatives of the RSFSR in Kalmykia's two territorial districts (the turnout was 80,278 per-

sons—(78%)—in the Manychskiy electoral district No. 821, and 78,260 persons—(80.7%)—in the Stepnoy electoral district). In the four national-territorial electoral districts the following candidates were elected: Minister of Education of the Kalmyk ASSR S. Badmayev (44.8% of votes), V. Dordzhiyev, director of the Kalmyk research institute for beef farming (54.7%), Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kalmyk ASSR B. Mikhailov (77%), and V. Babichev, deputy director of the organizational committee of the CPSU Central Committee (50.1%); the turnout in these districts ranging from 72 to 85.2%. The first congress of people's representatives of the RSFSR took place in May 1990. M. Mukubenov was elected to represent the Kalmyk ASSR in the Soviet of Republic at the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR. S. Badmayev, V. Dordzhiyev, and B. Mikhailov were elected to the Soviet of Nationalities at the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.

Therefore, the number of Kalmyk representatives in the supreme federal authority increased from two to six under the new legislation. Moreover, this representation became permanent during the entire operation of the Congress of people's representatives and of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.

The last Soviet campaigns for forming the state authorities that were held in the late 1980s included what can be seen as components of a transition, post-Soviet electoral system, namely alternative voting at the place of residence, and the possibility to run for unlimited number of candidates. In essence, the elections to the higher authorities of the USSR, the RSFSR, and autonomous republics, which took place in 1989–1990, were based on a transitional electoral system.

Along with the elections of people's representatives of the RSFSR in early March of 1990, the elections to the supreme state authority of the Kalmyk ASSR were held in 130 electoral districts within the republic, in compliance with the Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on the procedure of elections of people's representatives to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR and with the law of the Kalmyk ASSR on the elections of people's representatives to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of 2 November 1989. These were the first elections in the republic that were carried out in two rounds (4 and 17, March) and in a democratic (to a degree) way: the party authorities did not send down their quotas and—in some districts—they even did not have a chance to influence the process of candidates' nomination. The total of 351 candidates ran for the 130 seats in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. One candidate per electoral district ran 24 electoral districts and two or more

candidates in 106 electoral districts. Thus this was the beginning of alternative democratic elections to the highest republican authority.

The voter turnout in the elections of people's representatives in the Kalmyk ASSR on March 4, 1990 reached 87.3% of the voters included in the electoral list. For the first time in the Soviet-time electoral practice, a second voting round was held within the same election campaign in as many as 33 electoral districts with a turnout of 79.3%. These figures show that some components of the democratic electoral principles appeared in the process of formation of representational authorities for the first time in the long Soviet-era history, while the party organizations did not dare to exercise direct control of election campaigns any longer.

As a result of the two election rounds held on March 4 and 17, 116 people's representatives were elected to the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. The remaining representatives were elected on an alternative basis in the following months (April–May 1990).

The republican parliamentary assembly was now constituted of a considerable number of new representatives (80.1% were elected for the first time). Since a majority of those candidates that ran in the campaign were leaders of party bodies, Soviet executive power bodies, and enterprises, Communists eventually made up as many as 87% of the parliamentarians in the Supreme Soviet of the ninth convocation (ironically, in the earlier times the party organizations had made sure that no more than 50% of people's representatives were party members, so as to demonstrate the unity of the party and the people). The social composition of the new Supreme Soviet therefore was dramatically different from the typical picture of the Soviet time, when the representation of various social strata in the authority bodies was secured by orders from above.

Now there were only 6.1% of proletarians and peasants among the assembly members (while in the earlier convocations they would often make up 50%), 6.8% of creative intelligentsia and representatives of scientific community, 9% of women (the mandatory number had been up to around 40% before). The level of education of the people's representatives was now rather high as compared to what it had been. The total of 90.3% of people's representatives in the Supreme Soviet of 1990 had higher education, 11 among them had the "candidate of science" and doctoral degrees.

The majority of the new Supreme Soviet was made up of directors of large enterprises and organizations (42 persons, i.e., 36%), heads of collective and Soviet farms (27 persons, i.e., 23.3%), and the leaders of the party organizations and Soviet executive bodies (27 persons, i.e., 23.3%). In terms of membership, the new Supreme Soviet was rather like an as-

sembly of the party and industrial elite than a state legislative authority. Two representatives of religious communities were elected as people's representatives for the first time.

Such was the membership of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of the last convocation, which was the first independent and free legislative authority in the Soviet-era history. This Supreme Soviet was to solve momentous problems pertinent to the state, economic, and social development in the period of transition, when the political conditions in the country were changing, when the nation was struggling to find ways to reform and democratize the Soviet political system, and a new market economy was on its way. Moreover, the republican Supreme Soviet had to operate in a new situation, when an effective measure had been taken to ensure equal rights of different peoples. In particular, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR passed a resolution *On cancellation of legislative acts under the Declaration of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR of 14 November 1989 "On the recognition as unlawful and criminal of the repressions against the peoples that were subjected to forced resettlement, and on the provision of their rights"* on March 7, 1991. The RSFSR in its turn enacted a law *On the political rehabilitation of the repressed peoples* on April 26, 1991. All these changes became possible as a result of democratization in the society and the transition to the rule of law.

The first session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR of the ninth convocation started on March 30 (the first sitting) and continued to work on April 11–13, 1990 (second sitting). During the first sitting, a report of the responsible commission regarding the powers of people's representatives in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR was presented and discussed. Then the members of the assembly elected the chairman, deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet, permanent commissions, Chairman of the Council of ministers of the Kalmyk ASSR, the Supreme Court of the Kalmyk ASSR, and people's judges for the city and district people's courts. The republic's government was formed and other issues were resolved.

Six candidates were suggested for the position of the chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. Two of them—First Secretary of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Party Committee V. Zakharov and Second Secretary of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Party Committee B. Muyevev—stood down.

Two secret ballot rounds resulted in the election of V. Basanov, former secretary on ideology of the Kalmyk *Oblast* Party Committee, the chairman of Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. N. Khalmanov, who was the head of the Organizational department at the Kalmyk *Oblast* Party

Committee, was elected as the deputy chairman in an open ballot. For the first time in the practice of electing high state officials, the candidates for these positions were not agreed on with either the CPSU Central Committee or the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR.

During the second sitting of the first session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, which was held on April 11–13, 1990, the government of the Kalmyk ASSR was formed, which included the chairman (B. Mikhailov), two first deputy chairmen, three deputy chairmen, chief clerk, nine ministers, and nine chairmen of state committees. The session also appointed the Supreme Court officials, including the chairman, two deputy chairmen, and five members, 221 people's assessors, and the Committee for People's Control consisting of its chairman, two deputies, and 12 members.

Having solved the organizational issues during its first two sessions, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR, assembled for its third session on August 16–17, 1990 to discuss a draft *Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk ASSR*, for which there was a sufficient legal basis by the time. The law of the USSR *On the foundations for economic relations between the USSR and the union and autonomous republics* of April 10, 1990 was one of the first legislative acts that recognized an autonomous republic as a legal entity of the Union, equal in its rights with a union republic. The law in question was based on the principles of federalism, economic independence and mutual responsibility between the USSR, and the union and autonomous republics. The law endued of the union and autonomous republics with the powers to solve economic and social issues except those that were stipulated as falling under USSR's direct jurisdiction by the Constitution of the USSR, the Soviet legislation, and the law in question.

In particular the legislature specified that "in their territories under the provision of compliance with the legislation of the USSR, the union and autonomous republics shall

- possess, use and dispose of land, other natural resources in their interest and in the interest of the USSR;
- pass laws and other legislative acts that will stipulate the conditions of economic activities on these republics' territories;
- solve the issues pertaining to taxation and administer the budget;
- conduct foreign trade in compliance with the provisions set in international treaties signed by the USSR and in the agreements between the USSR and the republics...

Those economic relations between the USSR and the republics, as well as between different republics, which are not covered by the corresponding legislation, shall be regulated by bilateral and multilateral agreements.”

The Resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR *On the procedure of enactment of the law of the USSR “On the foundations for economic relations between the USSR and the union and autonomous republics”* stipulated that the Supreme Soviets of the union and autonomous republics introduce corresponding amendments into the republican legislation.

Another union law created the necessity for autonomous republics to amend their legal status. The law of the USSR *On distribution of powers between the USSR and federal entities* of April 26, 1990 defined an autonomous republic as a Soviet socialist state and federal entity. It was stipulated that the relations between autonomous republics and other autonomous entities, on the one hand, and union republics comprising them, on the other hand, be determined by agreements and treaties.

Speaking about the so-called “parade of sovereignization” of autonomous republics that started in July 1990, one should mention the general atmosphere that accelerated the process. The atmosphere was created in particular by the 1st Congress of People’s Representatives of the RSFSR and speeches presented at the congress by some prominent participants concerning the need to enhance the legal status of autonomous republics up to the level of that of union republics. People’s Representative of the RSFSR B. Yeltsin stressed in his program speech of May 16, 1990 delivered at the 1st Congress of People’s Representatives of the RSFSR, that within the Russian Federation the relations between its entities should be regulated by the federal treaty that would guarantee their sovereignty and economic independence. People’s Representative of the RSFSR P. Abdu-latipov expressed a similar idea: “We must make sure that autonomous republics enjoy the same rights that union republic do at present.”

Thus, when drafting and enacting their declarations of state sovereignty, autonomous republics had legal basis, as well as moral and legal support on the part of the 1st Congress of People’s Representatives of the RSFSR. The Declaration on State Sovereignty of the RSFSR passed by the 1st Congress of Russia’s People’s Representatives on July 12, 1990, which introduced profound changes into Russia’s politics and state arrangement and defined political borders between the USSR and RSFSR, confirmed the need for considerable enhancement of the rights of autonomous republics, autonomous *oblasts*, and autonomous *okrugs*, as well as of the *krais* and *oblasts* of the Russian Federation. Besides, the sover-

eignty of republics was confirmed by a federal treaty on delimitation of jurisdictions and powers between the federal authorities of the Russian Federation and the authorities of the sovereign republics comprised by the Russian Federation (March 31, 1992).

However, the question of whether or not state sovereignty was expedient in the case of national republics comprised by the federal state, whether or not it matched the actual state and economic conditions existing within the federal entities, and whether or not it was in line with the principle of territorial integrity of the Russian Federation and with the centuries-old traditions of common life of the peoples of Russia deserves a separate discussion. In addition, one should note that the processes in question were taking place during the disintegration of the USSR.

The issue of Kalmykia's state sovereignty was perceived in such a serious way and the conditions in the country were such that none of the republican leaders or people's representatives expressed any hesitations with regard to the matter. A draft Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk ASSR was put forward and discussed on two occasions at the sessions of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR. After discussing the report by Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Kalmyk ASSR B. Mikhailov regarding the transition to a market economy in the USSR and measures for forming market structure and mechanisms within the republics, the third session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR (August 16, 1990) considered proposed versions of the Declaration. The session of the Supreme Soviet ruled that the draft Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk ASSR be passed in the first reading and published for the republic-wide discussion, then the draft be amended taking into account remarks and comments by people's representatives and citizens, and presented at the next session. After a two-month discussion and amending, the draft Declaration was delivered by the working group at the fourth, extraordinary session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR that assembled on October 18, 1990. V. Sergeyev, chairman of the Commission of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on the issues of legislation and rule of law, presented a report regarding the draft Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk ASSR. After necessary clarifications were made to answer numerous questions, 18 people's representatives delivered their suggestions and comments regarding the draft. The Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk ASSR, which had been designed in accordance with the founding principles specified in the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the RSFSR, was passed by unanimous vote at the session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk ASSR on October 18, 1990.

The Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk ASSR had statutory force and introduced crucial changes into the republic's legal status, representing the basis on which to elaborate a new Constitution of the Kalmyk ASSR. The Declaration proclaimed state sovereignty in a clear and explicit manner. The title of the republic was changed accordingly under a resolution by the 4th Congress of people's representatives of the Russian Federation, the word "autonomous" having been deleted and the republic now named the Kalmyk Soviet Socialist Republic. The Kalmyk SSR was now declared a sovereign state comprised by the RSFSR and an entity within the RSFSR and USSR at the same time, the relations between the republic and the RSFSR and USSR now determined based on mutual treaties and agreements. However, there was still a possibility for the republic to delegate some of its powers to the authorities of the USSR and RSFSR and to establish joint powers.

As a sovereign state, the Kalmyk ASSR established the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of the Kalmyk SSR on its territory, which was now indivisible and inviolable. However, at the same time it was stipulated that the laws of RSFSR and USSR, which do not contradict the republic's interests, have supreme legal force on its territory.

Although the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR stipulated the right of the Kalmyk people to self-determination (incidentally this stipulation was based on Article 4 of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the RSFSR), the Kalmyk SSR was defined as a form of state of all the Kalmyk people, which was the entity of sovereignty and source of the state authority in the Kalmyk SSR.

Taking into account the multinational composition of the republic's population, the Declaration proclaimed both Kalmyk and Russian as the republic's state languages, introduced its citizenship, which was compliant with the citizenship of the USSR and RSFSR.

Along with the political guarantees of sovereignty and state independence, the Declaration established economic guarantees. Article 6 stated that the land, underground resources, water resources, flora and fauna in their natural condition, as well as the economic, scientific, and technological potential of the Kalmyk SSR belong to its people and represent the economic foundation of the republic's sovereignty.

The process of the republic's status change was not concluded with the passing of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR. On October 18, 1990, the same session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR enacted a resolution on top-priority measures for the implementation of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR. The repub-

lic's Supreme Soviet instructed all state bodies to comply with the Declaration's provisions while drafting legislative acts pertinent to economic, social, and cultural spheres.

The Supreme Soviet authorized the republic's Council of Ministers to establish a permanent representation of the Kalmyk SSR in the Council of Ministers of the RSFSR and to prepare and introduce suggestions concerning the restoration of the full sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR over its lands, rented by republics, *krais*, and *oblasts* of the RSFSR. Responsible ministries and state offices were authorized to work out draft legislation on the citizenship of the Kalmyk SSR, and propositions regarding the state symbols (the coat of arms, state flag, and the anthem).

Meanwhile the drastic political developments in the country would leave many provisions of the republics' newly passed declarations of sovereignty not implemented and render them outdated and in a need of serious amendment. However, the declarations did perform their historical role: they changed the legal status of autonomous republics.

Among the amendments and supplements introduced into the Constitution of the RSFSR by the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR, there were changes in Articles 106, 108 (part 3 and part 2 respectively) made on May 24, 1991, namely the words "autonomous republics" were replaced by the words "republics comprised by the RSFSR."

Declarations of national republics on the whole remained an important source for studying history of nation and state building in the RSFSR, of search for new federal relations in the new Russian Federation, and of the building of democratic multiethnic state where the rule of law would prevail.

In the conditions of sweeping political events on a global scale, when the fate of the entire Soviet Union was being determined, the union republics and national republics of the Russian federation were striving to establish and secure their new status and endeavored to create a legal basis for their economic sovereignty and for the implementation of their state sovereignty. In the Kalmyk SSR, a number of laws were passed to achieve these ends. In particular the 5th session of the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR passed the law of the Kalmyk SSR on the land and property in the Kalmyk SSR (passed in the first reading on February 20, 1991), and the law on farm management (February 21, 1991).

The land law of the Kalmyk SSR stipulated that the land within the territory of the Kalmyk SSR belongs to its people and may represent two forms of property, that is, state property and private property. The republic would guarantee necessary conditions for developing state and private land property and ensure their equal protection.

The land law of the Kalmyk SSR confirmed the jurisdictions of the USSR and RSFSR in the sphere of regulation of the land relations, and determined the corresponding jurisdiction of the Kalmyk SSR. The jurisdiction of the Kalmyk republic in the sphere of land relations included:

- disposing of all lands within the borders of the Kalmyk SSR;
- developing and improving of land legislation;
- determining the borders of territories with a special legal status of the land;
- specifying the amounts and forms of payment, rates, and procedure for imposition of tax on the land, and providing for tax exemptions;
- in cooperation with the local soviets of people's representatives developing and implementing programs on the rational use of lands, soil amelioration, protection of land resources combined with other environment protection measures;
- monitoring land use and protection;
- organizing land-regulation and carrying out the state land registration;
- establishing the policy for the protection of the rights of land proprietors, landowners, and land tenants;
- resolving land-related disputes;
- regulating other matters in the sphere of land use and protection in compliance with the legislation of the USSR, the RSFSR, and the Kalmyk SSR.

At the same session, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR passed a resolution *On enacting the Khalmg Tangch law of the Kalmyk SSR (The Land Law) and on the implementation of the land reform*. The Supreme Soviet authorized the republic's Council of Ministers to develop a program for state support of farmers and agricultural cooperatives, which would incorporate privileges and economic incentives, as well as to design and enact legislative acts based on the new Land Law.

The final version of the Property Law was passed by the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR on November 15, 1991. The law contained the principal provisions regarding property rights to be enacted in the territory of Kalmykia, and specified the legitimate subjects and objects of property rights, property rights *per se*, and types of property. More types of property were specified than before: private property, communal property, state property, NGO property, and religious organization property. It was also stipulated that it was legitimate for the RSFSR, other republics and foreign states, for their legal entities and natural persons, as well as for international organizations to own property in the Kalmyk SSR. The law

also provided for different types of joint property ownership, that is, the possibility for natural persons, legal entities, and states to unite their properties.

The Property Law of the Kalmyk SSR of November 15, 1991, therefore, regulated property relations by specifying the subjects and objects of property rights, forms of property, foundations for property rights, and principles of property right protection in the conditions of the transition to market economy. The law became the basis for developing entrepreneurship, property privatization, and for legislative acts regulating property relations in the Kalmyk SSR.

In its resolution of regarding the enactment of the Property Law of November 15, 1991 in the Kalmyk SSR, the republic's Supreme Soviet authorized the Council of Ministers to specify the objects of state property in the Kalmyk SSR and conduct measures for delimiting the state property between the Kalmyk SSR and RSFSR, and between the Kalmyk SSR and administrative and territorial entities.

Somewhat earlier, on February 21, 1991, the republic's Supreme Soviet passed a law *On farm management* that stipulated economic, social, and legal foundations for managing farms and farm associations on the territory of the Kalmyk SSR. The law guaranteed the right of citizens to create farms on the republic's territory, to manage farms independently, and to receive the support and protection on the part of the state for their lawful interests and right for free cooperation.

With a view to implementing this law, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR authorized the republic's Council of Ministers to elaborate a program for farm support in the Kalmyk SSR, and to develop a legislative basis for carrying out the program in an efficient way.

Among the most crucial tasks pertinent to the state sovereignty were determining the status of the native language, altering the linguistic situation in the republic, and revival and development of the culture of the Kalmyk people, as well as all other peoples residing in the republic's territory. This was the reason why—guided by the provisions of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR—the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR passed the Law on Languages in the Kalmyk SSR on January 30, 1991. The law guaranteed all citizens' right to free and unhindered use of their native language in different spheres of public life, as well as provided for the revival, preservation, and development of the languages of the peoples residing the Kalmyk territory.

Based on the general principles of the language policy conducted in the USSR and RSFSR, the law specified the legal status and functions of the

republic's state languages, Kalmyk and Russian, and citizens' rights pertaining to the usage of the languages in various spheres of public life. The legislature clarified that the state language status of the Kalmyk and Russian languages would not hinder the use and development of the languages of other peoples residing in the republic. Based on the Language Law, the Council of Ministers drafted and passed a state program for the revival of languages in the Kalmyk SSR until the year 2000.

A tendency towards a breakup of the USSR being apparent in 1990, there arose a need for the preservation and reforming of the union on the basis of new agreements and treaties (there were two draft union treaties in November 1990 and March 1991). The national referendum that took place on March 17, 1991 on the initiative of the 4th Congress of People's Representatives (December 1990) was another step taken towards the preservation of the union state. The referendum question was: "Do you consider necessary the preservation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics as a reformed federation of equal sovereign republics, where the human rights and liberties of citizens of any nationality will be guaranteed in full?"

The total of 169,124, that is, 82.78% of the republic's electorate (204,301), persons voted in the referendum on the territory of the Kalmyk SSR. Majority of the republic's citizens (148,462 persons, i.e., 87.78% of the voter turnout) supported the preservation of the USSR as a reformed federation of sovereign republics.

On March 17, 1991, a RSFSR referendum was also held regarding the introduction of the post of President of Russia. The total of 169,097 persons (82.77%) voted in the RSFSR referendum in the Kalmyk electoral district No. 77. As many as 102,031 persons, that is, 60.33% of the voter turnout, supported the introduction of the post of President of Russia, while 62,833 persons, 37.15% of the turnout, voted against. Both the USSR and RSFSR referendums showed that the democratization processes had started in the society and that citizens were now able to express their will more freely, and to assume responsibility for the destiny of their nation.

On April 5, 1991, the 3rd (extraordinary) Congress of People's Representatives of the RSFSR passed a resolution regarding a presidential election campaign in the Russian Federation, and the official campaign started on May 31, 1991. On April 24, 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR passed a resolution on the enactment of the law of the RSFSR *On elections of President of the RSFSR* and the law *On President of the RSFSR*. The latter was approved on May 22, 1991 by the 4th Congress of People's Representatives of the RSFSR.

In early May 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR set up electoral districts for the presidential elections, including Kalmyk electoral district No. 77.

The turnout of the Kalmyk voters during the presidential elections on June 12, 1991 amounted to 77.65% (160,749 persons out of the 207,011 of the electorate). Out of the six candidates for the presidential post, B. Yeltsin gained the majority of votes in the Kalmyk electoral district.

The global and national events of the summer 1991—in particular, the breakup of the Soviet Union, suppression of the August coup d'état, elections of the president of the Russian state—even encouraged the national republics' further pursuit of their national statehood, clearly determined status within the Russian Federation, and improvement of federative relations.

The Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR of the ninth convocation recognized that the steps that Russia's democratic forces, the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR and President of the RSFSR Boris Yeltsin had taken in the course of the August coup d'état were lawful and timely, and started working to set up the post of the republic's president and preparing to the presidential elections based on the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR. On September 12, 1991, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR passed the laws *On President of the Kalmyk SSR* and *On the elections of President of the Kalmyk SSR*. On the same day, the Supreme Soviet ruled that the presidential elections be held on October 19, 1991.

The law *On the elections of President of the Kalmyk SSR* provided for the principles and procedure of the presidential elections in the republic. Under the law, candidates for the presidential post could be nominated by legally registered republican (Kalmyk SSR) political parties, NGOs and popular movements, trade unions, professional communities, associations of military service members, and associations of republic's citizens based on the place of residence. The law also specified that the nomination of candidates from political parties, NGOs, and movements be carried out at the congresses, conferences, or plenary meetings of their republican authorities.

A candidate was considered nominated when over half of the organizations' representatives elected to take part in the congress or a conference, or a higher electoral authority voted for him/her. On the other hand, in the cases of professional communities, associations of military service members, and associations of republic's citizens based on the place of residence, the nomination of candidates was to be carried out at assemblies with a turnout of at least 300 members according to a procedure stipulated by the law in question.

The above-mentioned organizations and groups had the right to nominate only one presidential candidate, who was also to be supported by at least 10,000 eligible citizens of the republic in order to be able to run for the office.

Under the law of the Kalmyk SSR *On President of the Kalmyk SSR* of September 12, 1991, the President was endowed with the powers of the head of the state and of the executive authorities. The President did not have the right to be a people's representative in the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR. In this way it was to be ensured that the republic's legislative and executive power branches were divided to comply with the separation of powers principle. However, given the specific role that the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR played, by its form of government Kalmykia was to be a presidential-parliamentary republic. The President of the republic is the guarantor of the Kalmyk citizens' rights and freedoms, of the republic's sovereignty, of the Kalmyk people's historical will to be a part of Russia, and of the observance of the Constitution and legislation of the Kalmyk SSR, Constitution and legislation of the RSFSR, decrees of Presidents of the RSFSR, as well as the obligations assumed by the Kalmyk SSR with regard to the RSFSR. The law stipulated that the President of the Kalmyk SSR and other executive authorities of the republic are a part of the united executive power of the Russian Federation.

The law specified that the Vice-President be elected by the Supreme Soviet of the republic on the president's recommendation. Later this provision was changed. The Vice-President was to be elected simultaneously with the President by secret ballot in the course of popular direct elections. The republic's President and Vice-President were to be citizens of Kalmykia, at least 30 years old, but not older than 60 years. They were to be elected for a term of five years, but for no more than two successive terms.

The law contained detailed provisions regarding the President's and Vice-President's powers and rights. The President of the Kalmyk SSR was to insure the republic's security and territorial integrity, the rule of law and legal order in its territory, social justice. He was also to be responsible for the government personnel issues, to distribute state awards and honorary titles of the Kalmyk SSR, submit nominations for state awards of the RSFSR. As the head of the state, the President represents the republic in relations with the RSFSR, other Soviet republics, and internationally.

The law determined the relations between the President and the republic's representative authority. The President was to deliver an annual re-

port to the Supreme Soviet regarding the situation in the republic. The Supreme Soviet had the right to cancel the President's decrees, to impeach the president, and to submit the question of the President's removal to an all-people's referendum. The President in his turn was not endowed with the power to dissolve or halt the activities of the republic's Supreme Soviet. Thus the Supreme Soviet took control of the situation. Later on, a number of amendments and supplements to the legislation were made in order to establish a better balance between the legislative and executive authorities.

After the date for the presidential elections was fixed, in the period of September 13–28, 1991, the nomination of presidential candidates took place. Political organizations, NGOs, and other groups elected five candidates at their assemblies. However, the supporters of two candidates could not gather the necessary 10,000 thousand signatures in a due time.

As many as 62.13% of the republic's electorate submitted their votes in the first electoral round that was held on October 19, 1991. Yet, no final result was achieved. A second voting round took place on November 3, 1991, with a voter turnout of 57.6%. The voter turnout was positively affected by the resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR *On the heads of executive authorities of the republics within the RSFSR* of October 11, 1991, which introduced presidential posts in the republics comprised by the RSFSR. However, none of the candidates won a sufficient number of votes to become President of the republic.

Having an entity within the Russian Federation, namely an equal sovereign republic and faced with the deficiency of the federal laws, Kalmykia started developing its own legislation that would go in line with the cause of effective development of the republic's statehood and the principle of state sovereignty declared by the Kalmyk SSR. First of all, the republic's Supreme Soviet passed the law on citizenship—Khalmg Tangch—on February 14, 1992. The law was based on the constitutional principle of the single citizenship of the Russian Federation. As Article 2 of the Federal Law on Citizenship, Article 2 of the Khalmg Tangch stated that Kalmyk citizens are simultaneously citizens of the Russian Federation.

Considering the legal link between a citizen and the state very important, the republic's Supreme Soviet emphasized in the initial part of the law that the citizenship of the Kalmyk SSR was an inalienable attribute of the sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR, which determined a person's affiliation with the Kalmyk SSR and all his/her rights and obligations, as well as the protection of the person by the Kalmyk SSR.

Under the federal law, double citizenship was also provided for in the republic. The legislation stipulated that those individuals who are not citizens of the Kalmyk SSR or of the Russian Federation and can prove their citizenship in another country were considered foreign citizens. The law provided detailed stipulations regarding the naturalization and termination of citizenship in the Kalmyk SSR. The main conditions for naturalization in the republic were the following: attainment of the age of 18, communicative competence in the two state languages, that is, Kalmyk and Russian, uninterrupted residence in the republic during the previous 10 years, and a permanent and legal source of income within the republic's territory. In addition, a person who wanted to naturalize in Kalmykia was to undertake to observe and respect the Constitution and laws of the Kalmyk SSR.

According to the Law, people belonging to the Kalmyk and Russian nationality as well as representatives of peoples having no national or state formations as a part of the Russian Federation and residing in the territory of the Kalmyk SSR on a permanent basis as of the date of the Law coming into effect were recognized as citizens of the Kalmyk SSR. Citizens of other republics forming a part of the Russian Federation could also acquire the Kalmyk citizenship based on special agreements between the Kalmyk SSR and other republics.

Special attention was paid to Kalmyks residing beyond the republic. Kalmyks living in the territory of the former USSR and wishing to become citizens of Kalmykia were recognized as citizens of the Kalmyk SSR.

The next document aimed at ensuring the sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR was the Law *On laying the economic basis for the sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR* (Khalmg Tangch) dated February 19, 1992. The goals of the law were primarily to protect the economic basis of the republican sovereignty, to stabilize and develop its national economy, and to establish the legal basis for implementing the economic part of the Declaration of State Sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR.

The Law stipulated for the exclusive right of the republic to dispose of and use its national wealth, historic and cultural values, and its property. The Law recognized that the republican property (property of the Russian Federation) was neither more nor less than joint property. The Law guaranteed the protection of property rights belonging to the Russian Federation and foreign states, as well as their citizens and organizations in the Kalmyk territory.

The Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR authorized the republican Soviet of Ministers to dispose of and control over the republican property

and conduct denationalization and privatization of state property in compliance with the laws of the Kalmyk SSR and Russian Federation. State enterprises located in the territory of the Kalmyk SSR and controlled by the Russian Federation were supposed to be converted into joint stock companies as well as other forms of property based on the same terms and conditions.

The Law provided the republican Soviet of Ministers with exclusive rights: to issue licenses for the exploration and extraction of underground resources, commercial fishery and production of shellfishes and water plants; to define the procedure for attracting foreign investments and granting concessions to foreign legal entities to explore and extract underground resources in the republican territory; to license and quote the goods and services imported into or exported from the territory of the Kalmyk SSR as agreed upon with competent authorities of the Russian Federation; to register entities participating in foreign economic activities; to accredit foreign companies, banks, and other organizations having their representative offices in the territory of the Kalmyk SSR.

According to the Law *On laying the economic basis for the sovereignty of the Kalmyk SSR* and Law of the RSFSR entitled *On the property in the RSFSR*, the Supreme Soviet of the Kalmyk SSR adopted a resolution about the delimitation of the state property in the Kalmyk SSR to the federal, republican and municipal one on February 18, 1992. When implementing the resolution, the republican Soviet of Ministers suggested to the government of the RSFSR to delimitate the enterprises and organizations located in the territory of the republic on an individual basis. There were 191 federal property enterprises of this type (24% of enterprises of all state property forms) in the territory of the republic.

As a part of the set of regulatory documents adopted to secure the republican economic sovereignty, the Kalmyk Republic adopted the Law *On subsurface resources* on June 3, 1992. It comprised the legal and economic basis for the all-round and harmonious exploitation of subsurface resources and their protection, and was aimed at protecting the republic's interests as the owner of subsurface resources and defending the rights of subsurface resources users.

The Law defined the joint powers of the Kalmyk Republic and state government of the Russian Federation in the sphere of the regulation of relations in the exploitation of subsurface resources. The control over the state subsurface resources was referred to the joint competence for implementing the common state policy of their exploitation and defining the conditions and procedure of subsurface resources exploitation including

the forms and amounts of payments. It was assumed that the parties were to exercise state control over the protection and harmonious exploitation of subsurface resources together. The republic could delegate some of its authorities related to the regulation of subsurface resources exploitation to state authorities of the Russian Federation on a contractual basis.

The Law stipulated that the Kalmyk Republic was an independent party in international and foreign economic relations. At the same time, federal state authorities were to coordinate international and foreign economic relations of Kalmykia jointly with the Republic of Kalmykia.

When forming the legal basis for solving the economic problems, the republican Supreme Soviet was also engaged in solving problems of state building. On February 14, 1992 it adopted a resolution on the reorganization of state authorities of the Kalmyk SSR. Taking into account the changes in the essence of the Kalmyk national statehood, the republican Supreme Soviet changed the name of the republic from the Kalmyk Soviet Socialist Republic into the Republic of Kalmykia (Khalmg Tangch) on February 20, 1992. Then the republican Supreme Soviet approved of the symbols of the Republic of Kalmykia (Khalmg Tangch): state hymn and state flag.

All of these regulatory and legal acts proved the independent initiative of the republic, which used to live and act upon instructions from higher-ranking authorities just like all other republics. The acts also reflected rapidly developing political events in the country, features of the transition period and process of searching for ways of building the statehood under conditions of the initiated development of actually federal relations. However, this stage turned out to be inevitable and necessary for developing the Kalmyk statehood under conditions of actually emerging federalism.

Under the conditions when national republics, some of the *krays* and *oblasts* were trying to ensure their true state sovereignty, it became urgently necessary to take measures on the all-Russian scale to preserve the state unity of the RSFSR's peoples that was formed historically and integrity of its borders, develop federal relations, improve the status of republics as constituent members of the federative Russian state, and enhance their independence and responsibility in the field of social, economic, political, legal, cultural, and national issues. The Federative Agreement comprising three documents (agreements about the delimitation of competence and powers between federal state authorities of the Russian Federation and government authorities of sovereign republics, *krays*, and *oblasts* forming a part of the Russian Federation; cities of Moscow and Saint-Petersburg in the Russian Federation; autonomous *oblasts* and *okrugs*

forming a part of the Russian Federation) signed by plenipotentiary representatives from constituent members of the Russian Federation and by the President and Chairman of the Supreme Soviet on behalf of the Federation in the Georgievsky Hall, Great Kremlin Palace, on March 31, 1992 became such a document. On April 10, 1992 the Sixth Congress of People's Delegates of the Russian Federation approved of the Federative Agreement and made it a part of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

The title of the agreement comprised the term of "sovereign republics." Perhaps, it was supposed to be understood as recognition of the amended status of the former autonomous republics and declarations on their state sovereignty adopted by them. At the same time, the title also says that the sovereign republics are a part of the Russian Federation. In this connection, the key objective of the underwriters was to preserve the state unity of peoples of the Russian Federation forming a part of it, as it was formed historically, and integrity of its republics and territories forming its part as well as strengthen international consent, confidence, and mutual understanding. Besides, the contracting parties tried to update their relations fundamentally on the basis of voluntary distribution of authorities and their efficient implementation.

Thus, the preamble of the agreement laid the basis for the state unity of peoples of the Russian Federation, voluntary distribution of powers, independent execution of the state power by republics within the scope of their authorities, precedence of human and civil rights and freedoms regardless of their nationality, and elements of the national policy of the Russian Federation (recognition of state sovereignty declarations, respect for the national dignity, etc.).

Article 1 of the agreement gives a list of issues to be addressed by the federal state authorities of the Russian Federation and having a nationwide significance. The issues were important both for the Federation as a whole and its constituent members (republics). We think that it is possible to divide the issues related exclusively to the competence of federal state authorities into the following three groups. First of all, it is the adoption and amendment of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws as well as supervision over compliance with them; provision of the legal basis for the common market; financial, currency, credit, and customs regulation, as well as creation of money; state border status and protection; criminal, procedural, and administrative legislation; civil, procedural, and arbitration legislation, etc.

Second, the federal structure and territory of the Russian Federation; regulation of human and civil rights and freedoms as well as citizenship of

the Russian Federation; establishment of the system of federal legislative, executive, and judicial bodies as well as procedure of their organization and activities; formation of federal state authorities; federal state property and its control; formation of the basis for the federal policy and federal programs in the fields of state, economic, ecology, social, cultural, and national development of the Russian Federation; federal budget, federal taxes and duties, federal funds for regional development; federal energy systems and nuclear engineering; federal transport, means of communication, information, and communication; defense and security, defense industry, etc.

Third, issues related to the foreign policy and international relations of the Russian Federation and issues of war and peace; external economic relations, legal procedures, and federal conflict of laws; weather service; standards, basic reference standards, metric system, and computation of time; geodesy, cartography, etc.

Article 3 stipulated for the representation of republics in federal authorities. However, no mechanism of implementing the provision has been developed yet (perhaps, it is the permanent presentation of republics in the existing government or the presentation in collegial bodies, membership in governing bodies, etc.).

Provisions of Article 1 of the Federative Agreement formed a part of the new Constitution of the Russian Federation later.

Article 2 defined the issues referred to the joint competence of federal state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of the member republics of the Russian Federation. Their common efforts were to ensure the compliance of constitutions and laws of the republics with the Constitution and laws of the Russian Federation, as well as legitimacy, legal order and public security, and control over accidents and acts of God.

A large group of issues related to the cultural and social sphere was referred to the joint competence: upbringing, education, science, culture, physical culture, and sport; health care, protection of the family, maternity, paternity, and childhood; social security; protection of human and citizens' rights and rights of national minorities as well as indigenous living environment and traditional life style of small and ethnic communities; provision of legitimacy, legal order, and public security; management of natural resources, environment protection, and provision of ecological security; preservation of historic and cultural monuments, etc.

Economic issues demanding a coordinated approach formed an independent group of issues. The delimitation of state property and establish-

ment of common taxation and levy principles can be referred to such issues.

Such legal and legal regulation issues as administrative, procedural, labor, family, land, housing, water and forest law, subsurface resources and environment protection legislation, legal regulation of intellectual property, court organization, advocacy, notariat, personnel of law enforcement authorities, and general principles of local self-government organization are referred to joint competence and are to be solved upon agreement between federal and republican authorities.

As for all issues failing within the joint competence, the agreement provided for the publication of fundamentals of legislation, according to which republican state authorities were to exercise legal regulation on their own, including the adoption of laws and other legal acts by federal state authorities.

According to the agreement, the republics forming a part of the Russian Federation were provided with independent powers and the scope of issues referred to their competence was defined. The agreement stipulated that national republics had full state authority (legislative, executive, and judicial) in their territories except for powers referred to the competence of federal state authorities of the Russian Federation. It was emphasized that the territory and status of the republic forming a part of the Russian Federation could not be amended without its consent.

The agreement (Article 3) defined that republics become independent participants of international and external economic relations and agreements with other republics, *krais*, autonomous *oblasts*, and autonomous *okrugs* unless they conflict with the Constitution and laws of the Russian Federation. However, it can be seen that the provisions are general by their nature because they are restricted to their proclamation and assignment of the coordination of republics' international and external economic relations to federal state authorities only.

The Federative Agreement confirmed the key provisions of the declaration about the state sovereignty of the republics and their ownership to the land and its subsurface resources as well as water, flora, and fauna. However, it stipulated that it is the fundamentals of the legislation of the Russian Federation and legislation of the republics that regulated all issues related to the ownership, management, and disposal of the natural resources.

The agreement provided for the issues related to imposing the state of emergency in the territory of the republics. The contracting parties agreed that federal state authorities could impose the state of emergency in the

territory of any republic when necessary but upon the consent of the republic. The republics were entitled to impose the state of emergency in their territories when it concerned their territories only but upon prompt notification of the President and supreme state authority of the Russian Federation.

Article 4 of the agreement laid the legal base for the development and improvement of federal relations in the Russian state by means of delegating some of the powers of federal state authorities to the republics, which, in their turn, could also delegate some of their powers to them. All this was to be on a contractual basis.

The Federative Agreement stipulated that relations between federal and republican state authorities were to be based on the Constitution of the Russian Federation and constitutions of the republics, mutual respect, and solidarity. The parties regulated their law-making activities on the issues and referred to their competence on this basis.

According to the legal base laid by Article 8 of the agreement, the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation made the Federative Agreement including the agreement on the delimitation of the competence and powers between federal state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of the republics forming a part of the Russian Federation a part of the Constitution of the Russian Federation (as an independent part) based on a special decree adopted in April 1992.

However, the Constitution of the Russian Federation adopted by the nation-wide voting on December 12, 1993 failed to include federal agreements on the delimitation of competence and powers between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation. Only their individual provisions, that is, issues referred to the competence of federal state authorities (Article 71 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation) and joint competence of federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation (Article 72 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation), were included in it. Besides, the new Constitution of the Russian Federation (Section 2) provided that provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation would prevail in case provisions of the Federative Agreement (the three agreements) fail to comply with the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Thus, the adoption of the Federative Agreement—agreements on the delimitation of the competency and powers between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation—is important not only from the point of view of developing the fed-

eralism principles, national policy, and federative links but also for improving the status and expanding the powers of national republics, as well as strengthening and developing the Russian Federation. The key provisions of the Federative Agreement were legalized by the Constitution of the Russian Federation. Thereby the Federative Agreement became a constitutional act and one of the key legal documents forming the legal base for the building of the federal state.

In spite of the measures taken, the political and economic situation in the country and republic did not improve. In addition, the fight among different groups of state authorities aggravated and opposition between the legislative and executive power intensified. The objective circumstances under the conditions of the initiated transition to market relations dictated the need to take cardinal institutionalization-related measures, first of all, institutionalization of fundamentals of the new Kalmyk national statehood.

To meet the new requirements, the republican Supreme Soviet updated and amended the electoral system (electoral right and system of organization and holding the republican Presidential elections), as well as the republican Law *On the President of Kalmykia* (January 28, 1993) in November 1992–January 1993. The republican presidential elections were launched in late January 1993 and were over on April 11. K.N. Ilyumzhinov was elected as the President. Kalmyk voters examined his program and heard his offers on the ways and methods of its implementation, and preferred him to the other two candidates.⁶

The introduction of the President's office and nation-wide election of the republican leader modified the state system of Kalmykia fundamentally. The former Soviet system of state power institutions and political basis of the statehood were officially abolished on April 30, 1993 by the resolution of the Kalmyk Supreme Soviet to abolish local soviets of people's delegates in the republic. An interim legislative (representative) state authority whose aim was to create the legal base for the transition period and form a system of executive state authorities and local self-government bodies jointly with the head of the republic was formed the same day.

New institutes of the state power were established according to the will of the Kalmyk people and in compliance with the legal base based on democratic principles. Therefore, the state power in Kalmykia took a truly legitimate shape. This made it possible to transfer the republic's relations with the federal center from the formerly existing command and control policy based on the democratic centralism principle to the legal sphere. A real step in the development of federative relations was made.

We must admit that at first the legal base of Kalmykia was formed not in strict compliance with the constitutional federalism principles (delimitation of the competence and powers, division of state power, etc.) because all this was new for the local law-making process and federal mechanisms for their implementation were not developed yet. In particular, the Parliament of the Kalmyk Republic as well as other constituent members of the Russian Federation kept forming courts of general jurisdiction and republic's arbitration court until the Federal Constitutional Law *On the judicial system of the Russian Federation* was adopted (December 31, 1996). We think that such deviations that took place before should not be considered as a manifestation of separatism on the part of the republics.

One can also put blame on central authorities for creating an uncertain environment at the local level by giving contradictory instructions and disorganizing the activities of state authorities in the regions. In early 1993, open confrontation between the executive and legislative powers of the Russian Federation deepened markedly. The President of the Russian Federation made an appeal to Russian citizens on March 20, 1993. He described the situation that formed in the country as well as reasons of complicated relations between the President and the Congress of People's Delegates, and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation.

The referendum on the vote of confidence for the President of the Russian Federation held on April 25, 1993 failed to stabilize the situation as well. By the middle of 1993, Russia experienced a deep statehood crisis. To overcome the economic and political crisis in the country, the President of the Russian Federation suspended the legislative, executive, and controlling functions of the Congress of People's Delegates and the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Federation by his decree issued on September 21, 1993. He planned to form the Parliament of the Russian Federation comprising two houses (Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation) instead, as well as adopt the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

The formation of the updated representative and legislative authority—Federal Assembly comprising two houses (Council of the Federation and the State *Duma*)—played a positive role for establishing the new Russian federalism and democracy, as well as stabilizing the statehood. Two members represented each constituent member of the Russian Federation regardless of the population in the Federal Assembly, and it ensured stable and permanent federative relations between the constituent member(s) of the Russian Federation and federal state authorities.

In late 1993, the country was getting ready for the election of delegates to the Council of the Federation and the State *Duma*, as well as for the

adoption of the Constitution of the Russian Federation. On December 12, 1993 the very important stage in the constitutional development of the country and coming into being of the new federative statehood of Russia was over—the Parliament of the Russian Federation (Federal Assembly) was formed. Participants of the referendum voted for the new Constitution of the Russian Federation.

The adoption of the new Constitution of the Russian Federation laid the legal base for the democratic republic in Russia, its statehood, federative form of its state system, political and juridical institutes, principles of organizing federal state authorities and local self-government bodies, as well as their activities and guarantees of human and civil rights and freedoms; moreover, it also guaranteed conditions for the development of our society and constituent members of the Russian Federation. The Constitution of the Russian Federation comprised the key principles of federalism and federative relations. The most important principles are the unity of sovereignty, legal and economic space, citizenship of the Russian Federation, integrity and indivisibility of its territory, its state integrity, unity of the state power system, delimitation of the competence and powers between state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of its constituent members, as well as equality and self-determination of peoples in the Russian Federation.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation reflected the multi-ethnic nature as well as economic and geographic distinctions of Russian regions characterizing the up-to-date Russian federative statehood. Thereby, it is not accidental that constituent members of the Russian Federation were divided into types (republics, *krais*, *oblasts*, cities of federal significance, autonomous *oblasts*, and autonomous *okrugs*) to be defined by different types of regulatory legal acts: the republican status by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Constitution of the republic; and the status of the *krai*, *oblast*, city of federal significance, autonomous region, and autonomous *okrug* by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and statute of the *krai*, *oblast*, city of federal significance, autonomous region, and autonomous *okrug* to be adopted by the legislative (representative) body of the respective constituent member of the Russian Federation (though the documents do not differ by their legal effect).

Having laid the basis for the symmetric federation, the Constitution of the Russian Federation preserved the main elements of asymmetry in the Russian federalism (republics were entitled to determine their state languages) that had no effect on principles of equality on behalf of the Federation's constituent members. Some authors see the asymmetry of the

Russian Federation in the fact that according to the federal Constitution the republican status is defined by the Constitution, while statutes define the status of other constituent members. The difference between the two documents lies in their official title only because they fully comply with the Constitution of the Russian Federation by their content. One can speak about the asymmetry of the Federation only during the short term while the Federative Agreement was in effect.

The Russian Constitution stipulated for the constitutional federation and the possibility to make bilateral agreements between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation (Clause 3, Article 11). However, the technology of the implemented process of forming the federalism basics represented a serious problem until recently. First, the key principle of the constitutional federation was violated. In practice, the constitutional and contractual federation was formed gradually (about 50 agreements were signed on behalf of the Russian President and leaders of constituent members of the Federation). Second, the constitutional principle of equality of Russia's constituent members was violated not only in relation to federal state authorities, which obtained different statuses because economic and political factors, natural and resource potential, etc. defined the contents and objective of the agreements.

As the Federal Law *On principles and procedure of delimitation of the competence and powers between state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of the members of the Russian Federation* was adopted (on June 24, 1999), the mechanisms of implementing the constitutional provisions (first of all, Article 72 of the Russian Constitution) as well as concluding bilateral agreements and contracts at the level of federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation were defined. Being far from perfect, the mechanisms attempted to bring the development of the federalism principles in compliance with the constitution and provide constituent members of the Federation with legal guarantees for implementing and protecting their statuses.

First of all, the above-mentioned Federal Law defined the understanding of joint competences of the Russian Federation and its constituent members as the kind of public relations to be regulated based on the competence of the Russian Federation and its constituent members in accordance with the Russian Constitution. It means that its functions and powers (rights and obligations of the state authority regarding the adoption of legal acts as well as taking of other state and power-related ac-

tions) are to be distributed between the power levels, but not tangible objects.

Thus, the sphere of public relations to be regulated in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Article 72) by the Russian Federation and constituent members of the Russian Federation manifests itself, first of all, in the following major issues.

1. State building and protection of rights and freedoms: ensuring the compliance of republican constitutions and laws as well as statutes, laws, and other regulatory legal acts of *krais*, *oblasts*, cities of federal significance, autonomous regions, and autonomous *okrugs* with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws; protecting human and citizens' rights, protecting the rights of national minorities, ensuring the legitimacy, legal order, and public security as well as the regimen of frontier zones; protecting the indigenous living environment and traditional lifestyle of small and ethnic communities; providing for common principles of organizing the system of state authorities and local self-government.

2. Regulation of the economy and social development: delimitation of the state property, issues related to the ownership, management, and disposal of the land, subsurface resources, and water and other natural resources; management of natural resources, environment protection and provision of economic security, special conservation areas, preservation of historic and cultural monuments; general issues related to upbringing, education, science, culture, physical culture, and sport; health care coordination, protection of the family, maternity, paternity, and childhood; social security including public welfare; control over accidents, acts of God, and epidemics and elimination of their consequences; establishment of common taxation and levy principles in the Russian Federation.

3. Activities of law-enforcement bodies and legal system: personnel of court and law enforcement authorities, advocacy, notariat, administrative, procedural, labor, family, housing, land, water and forest legislation, legislation on subsurface resources, and environmental protection.

4. Coordination of international and foreign economic relations of constituent members of the Federation and performance of international treaties of the Russian Federation.

In spite of different types of constituent members of the Federation, lawmakers stipulated their equality in the field of public relations in compliance with the constitutional equality principle; that is, when delimiting the competences and powers regarding one of the members of the Russian Federation it is impermissible to prejudice the rights and interests of other constituent members of the Russian Federation. This principle also means

that all constituent members of the Russian Federation have equal rights in their relations with state authorities of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law reflects the most important principle of the constitutionality regarding the federative development of the Russian statehood. It stipulates that federal constitutional laws, federal laws, constitutions, statutes, laws, or other regulatory legal acts of constituent members of the Federation as well as contracts and agreements cannot transfer, exclude or otherwise redistribute the competence of the Russian Federation and joint competence stipulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

The provision of the Federal Law prohibiting to apply federal laws as well as constitutions, statutes, laws, or other regulatory legal acts of constituent members of the Russian Federation and conclude agreements or contracts resulting in any change in the constitutional and legal status of the Federation's constituent member, derogation or loss of human and civil rights and freedoms stipulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation or violation of the state integrity of the Russian Federation and unity of its state power system is a serious guarantee for the development of federalism and democratic legal state. The legislative provision of this guarantee by the principle of supremacy of the Russian Constitution and federal laws is of great value. In case of any violation of powers of state authorities regarding the competence stipulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal constitutional laws, and federal laws will apply.

When defining the forms of implementing the powers by the competence of the Russian Federation, lawmakers confined themselves to the constitutional provision that federal constitutional laws and federal laws applicable all over the territory of the Russian Federation regulate this field from the legal point of view. As for the issues referred by the Constitution of the Russian Federation to joint competence of the Russian Federation and its constituent members, it is emphasized that the federal laws defining the basis (general principles) of legal regulation including the principles for delimitation of powers between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation, as well as federal laws aimed at the implementation of powers of federal state authorities, will be published. A very important legal problem that was faced in practice—the optimum balance between the federal and regional legislation by joint competence—was solved now. The law defines the general legislative criteria for limits of federal regulation. A federal law on joint competence can be passed in the form of general principles.

According to the Federal Law and taking into consideration the available Russian experience in the field of constitutional and contractual regulation as well as experience of a number of foreign states, constituent members of the Russian Federation are entitled to regulate the issues referred to joint competence on their own (until federal laws are adopted). However, as soon as the respective federal law is adopted, regulatory legal acts of constituent members of the Russian Federation must be harmonized with the adopted federal law.

Thus, the Federal Law provided constituent members of the Russian Federation with the right of forward regulation of joint competence. At the same time, it legalized the principle determining the lawmaking limits for constituent members of the Federation for these issues.

The legislative consolidation of the right of constituent members of the Russian Federation to take part in the federal law-making process is positive for federalism development. The procedure of adjusting draft federal laws on joint competence with state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation is stipulated. According to the procedure, draft federal laws upon their submission to the State *Duma* by legal constituent members having the right of legislative initiative, as well as upon their adoption by the State *Duma* in the first reading must be submitted to state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation for contribution of their proposals and remarks within a monthly term. The draft must not be examined for the second reading until the expiration of the term.

A respective committee of the State *Duma* must examine the suggestions and remarks on the draft federal laws submitted by state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation within a one-month term (accept or reject them). In case state authorities of more than one third of constituent members of the Russian Federation oppose the given draft federal law on the whole, a conciliation commission comprising members of the State *Duma* and representatives from state authorities of the related constituent members of the Russian Federation will be established upon the resolution of the State *Duma*. However, the lawmakers reduced the participation of constituent members of the Russian Federation in the federal law-making process to the formal procedure by providing representatives from constituent members of the Russian Federation authorized by state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation only with the consultative capacity when working at the draft federal laws related to joint competence in State *Duma* committees and commissions. The Law also fails to answer the question: "What if the

conciliation commission fails to come to a compromise when settling the disputes?”

We think that constituent members of the Russian Federation should take part in the work at draft federal laws on joint competence from the very beginning (as accepted by parliaments of many countries), but not only when the State *Duma* adopts them in the first reading. It is very important that the reasons for rejection of the suggestions and remarks on draft federal laws related to joint competence submitted by constituent members of the Russian Federation must be specified at a session of the State *Duma*.

Moreover, having stipulated for the possibility of delimiting the competence and powers between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Federation on a contractual basis in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Federal Law defined a procedure for concluding the agreements and contracts.

The Federal Law under consideration solved a very important technical and legal problem related to the definitions of agreements and contracts by distinguishing them. The definition of an agreement complies well with the provision of Article 78, Constitution of the Russian Federation, which stipulated that federal executive authorities and executive authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation can delegate some of their powers to each other by mutual agreement.

The Federal Law considers a contract as a legal form of delimiting the competence and powers between state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation agreement as a legal form for delegating some powers of federal executive authorities and executive authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation to each other as a possibility to use them as an additional form. That is why a contract can be concluded when the federal law related to the joint competence directly stipulates that it is permissible to conclude a contract on the given joint competence, as well as when a federal law related to the joint competence is missing it is permissible to conclude a contract under the condition of harmonizing the said contract with the adopted federal law related to the given joint competence. An agreement can be made based on the federal law related to joint competences or contract. The provisions prove the superiority of the federal law as compared to the contract or agreement that is an important factor for the federal state stability. The importance of contracts and agreements as an additional form of delimiting the competence and powers makes it possible to withdraw from the practice of contractual federation and steadily follow

the constitutional model of the Russian federative system and equality of constituent members of the Russian Federation.

The asymmetry of Russian federalism and the ethnic diversity of Russia, as well as economic and geographic differences can be reflected in the contents of a contract because this Federal Law stipulates for the possibility to specify the joint competence taking into account the political, economic, social, geographic, ethnic, and other features of constituent members of the Russian Federation. The statement "taking into account the political... features" is puzzling. What do the lawmakers mean? Do they mean a possibility for a constituent member of the Russian Federation to politically exercise the rights provided to it? Or perhaps purely conjuncture aspects stipulated the conclusion of contracts? It is well known that foreign federative states conclude contracts for political purposes very seldom in their practice.

Since the content of contracts and agreements was defined, the lawmakers specified their parties. Federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation authorized by the law of the corresponding constituent member of the Russian Federation are parties to the contract. Federal executive authorities and executive authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation are parties to the agreement.

According to the Federal Law under consideration, subjects of the contract can be as follows: specification of competence and powers stipulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws, conditions and procedure of exercising the powers delimited under the contract, forms of interaction and cooperation during the contract performance, other issues related to performance of contractual provisions. Subjects of the agreement can be as follows: delegation of a part of authorities; conditions and procedure of transferring a part of authorities; material and financial basis for transferring a part of authorities; forms of interaction and cooperation during the performance of provisions of the agreement; other issues related to performance of provisions of the agreement.

The Federal Law establishes certain criteria and requirements for the form of the contract and agreement. First of all, it is related to the term of validity, language, and responsibilities of the parties to the contract or agreement. As a rule, contracts and agreements are made in Russian (and in the state language of the republic when necessary). They define the terms of their validity and procedure of early termination, as well as stipulate for the responsibility of the parties for any failure to comply or undue compliance with provisions of the contract or agreement. They can also

provide for unilateral termination of the contract or agreement and obligations to compensate for the damage incurred through their non-performance or unduly performance.

The procedure of preparation, preliminary consideration, and coordination of draft contracts and agreements determined by the President of the Russian Federation is quite important for the implementation of federalism principles. In compliance with the Federal Law, federal executive authorities must present their suggestions and remarks on the draft contracts or agreements within a one-month term.

According to the constitutional principle of equality of constituent members of the Russian Federation, the lawmakers stipulated that a state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation that is not a party to the contract or agreement is entitled to get draft contracts or agreements upon request before their approval and introduce its suggestions and remarks if, according to the constituent member of the Russian Federation, the contract or agreement prejudices its rights or interests.

Before the President of the Russian Federation and official(s) and/or authorized person(s) of the constituent member of the Russian Federation sign the draft contract, it is to be submitted by the President of the Russian Federation to the Council of the Federation and is to be submitted by the authorized person of the constituent member of the Russian Federation to the legislative (representative) state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. The legislative (representative) state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is to examine the draft contract in compliance with the procedure and terms stipulated by the Constitution (statute) or law of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The authorized person of the constituent member of the Russian Federation having obtained the results of the draft contract examination by the legislative (representative) state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is to inform the Council of the Federation about the results. The Council of the Federation is to examine the draft contract within a three-month term from the date it was informed about the results of its examination by the legislative (representative) state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. The results of the draft contract examination by the Council of the Federation informed to the President of the Russian Federation are to be taken into consideration when making a decision on signing the contract.

While quite different high-ranking officials used to be in charge of signing contracts, the Federal Law stipulated for common approaches to

signing contracts and agreements. The President of the Russian Federation or official (officials) and/or authorized person (authorized persons) of the constituent member of the Russian Federation are in charge of signing the contract.

As for agreements, the government of the Russian Federation is to approve or reject the draft agreement within a three-month term from the draft submission date. The head of the respective federal executive authority and official authorized by the constituent member of the Russian Federation are to sign the draft agreement approved by the government of the Russian Federation.

Thus, the adopted Federal Law harmonized the contractual process with the Constitution and regulated mechanisms of implementing the constitutional federalism principles to a certain degree.

When trying to make federalism real and centralizing the power in a democratic way, the Constitution of the Russian Federation stipulates that state authorities formed by constituent members of the Russian Federation independently exercise the state power in them in compliance with the fundamentals of the constitutional system accepted in the Russian Federation and general principles of the organization of representative and executive state authorities provided by the Federal Law *On general principles of organizing legislative (representative) and executive state authorities of the members of the Russian Federation* (October 6, 1999). According to the Law, the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws, as well as the Constitution (statute), laws and other regulatory legal acts of constituent members of the Federation, regulate the creation, formation, and activities of state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law of October 6, 1999 defined the constitutional principles for activities of state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation: state and territorial integrity of Russia, validity of sovereignty of the Russian Federation in its entire territory, supremacy of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws in the entire territory of Russia, unity of the state power system, division of the state power, division of competence and powers between state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of its constituent members, independent exercise of powers by state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation. The guarantee of citizens' rights to take part in the state administration both directly and via their representatives is one of the key objectives of state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation.

The system of state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation to be established by them independently and in compliance with fundamentals of the Russian constitutional system comprises a legislative (representative) authority, a supreme executive authority, and other state authorities of the constituent member of the Russian Federation to be formed in accordance with its constitution (statute). The lawmakers provided for the possibility to introduce the position of the supreme official in constituent members of the Russian Federation.

The Law stipulates that federal courts are to be established and conduct their activities in the territory of the constituent member of the Russian Federation in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Federal Constitutional Law *On the judicial system in the Russian Federation* (December 31, 1996). However, the Law fails to specify judges of general jurisdiction in constituent members of the Russian Federation, which are justices of the peace as well as constitutional and statutory judges in constituent members of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law on the general organization principles stipulated that the legislative (representative) state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is a standing and the only legislative authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation to be formed in accordance with the electoral right principles. The constitution (statute) of a member of the Russian Federation defines the name and structure of the body, taking into consideration its historic, national, and other traditions. The constitution (statute) of the constituent member of the Russian Federation stipulates the number of delegates and term of their authority (not to exceed five years). The legislative authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation can define the numerical strength of delegates working on a professional and permanent basis. The Federal Law stipulates that the legislative authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation becomes legitimate when it is formed in the amount of more than two thirds of the stipulated number of delegates.

The key powers of the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation are as follows: adaptation of the member's constitution (statute) and amendments to them; legal regulation within the scope of competence of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and within the scope of joint competence of the Russian Federation and its constituent members; other authorities stipulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Federal Law *On general principles of organizing legislative (representative) and executive state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation*, and other federal

laws, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

According to the Federal Law, the representative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is entitled by the law: to approve of the member's budget and report on its performance; establish the fundamentals of organization and activities of the member's legislative authority and procedure of holding the election to local self-government bodies in the territory of the constituent member of the Russian Federation as well as procedure of activities if the local self-government bodies within the scope of its authorities; approve of the member's social and economic development programs; provide for the taxes and charges referred to the member's competence as well as procedure of their levying; determine the procedure of forming and activities of extra-budgetary and currency funds of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and approve of the reports on the application of means by the funds; establish the procedure of control and disposal of the property of the constituent member of the Russian Federation including shares of the constituent member of the Russian Federation in capital assets of economic societies, associations, and enterprises belonging to other forms of legal entity's incorporation; approve of concluded and terminated contracts of the constituent member of the Russian Federation; stipulate for the procedure of holding the election to the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and election of the member's supreme official (head of the supreme executive authority), as well as procedure of scheduling and holding referendums in the constituent member of the Russian Federation; define the administrative and territorial system of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and procedure of its amendment; approve of the control system over the constituent member of the Russian Federation and define the structure of the supreme executive state authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The list of issues to be regulated by the law of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is not complete. The lawmakers stipulate that laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation can also govern other issues referred to the competence and authorities of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law on the general organization principles provides for the adoption of a regulatory legal act in the form of a decree by the legislative (representative) state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation according to which: the procedure of its activities is determined and individual officials of the constituent member of the Rus-

sian Federation are appointed, dismissed, and agree to take the office; the date of election to the legislative authority as well as date of election of the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation) is scheduled; referendums in the constituent member of the Russian Federation are scheduled and resolution on non-confidence (confidence) in the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive state authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation), as well as resolution on non-confidence (confidence) in heads of the member's executive organs in whose appointment it participated is adopted; agreements on territorial changes of constituent members of the Russian Federation are approved; judges of the constitutional (statutory) courts of the constituent member of the Russian Federation are appointed even though such judges are not stipulated in the system of state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation.

According to the Federal Law, the representative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is provided with powers to supervise over the compliance with and execution of laws, budget, and stipulated procedure of disposal of the property of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

Thus, all of the traditional key functions of a representative authority ensuring the democratic government and expressing the sovereign people's will of the constituent member of the Russian Federation are stipulated for the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law under examination outlines the constituent members entitled to officially submit draft laws to the representative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation, and enables the constituent member of the Russian Federation to independently pass resolutions on providing other bodies, public organizations and citizens residing in its territory with the right of legislative initiative. According to the law, delegates, supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive authority), and representative bodies of local self-government are mandatory provided with the right of legislative initiative in the representative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

Paying much attention to financial issues and intensification of control over and responsibility for forming and performing the budget, the Federal Law stipulated that the legislative authority of the constituent member

of the Russian Federation is to examine draft laws about the imposition or withdrawal of taxes, tax exemptions, and changes in financial liabilities related to expenses to be covered at the expense of the budget of the constituent member of the Russian Federation as advised by the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive state authority), along with his conclusion within the stipulated terms (at least 14 days).

The Federal Law specified a certain procedure of adopting regulatory legal acts by the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. According to the Law, the legislative (representative) authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation is in charge of adopting the constitution (statute) of the constituent member of the Russian Federation, as well as amendments of them. A resolution on such issues is considered as having been passed if most of the delegates—at least two thirds of the stipulated number of delegates—vote for the resolution. Laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation are to be passed by the majority of votes of the stipulated number of delegates and resolutions—by the majority of votes of the elected delegates. At present legislative authorities of all constituent members of the Russian Federation are to examine draft laws by at least two readings.

The lawmakers regulated the final stage of the law-making process in the constituent member of the Russian Federation in a great detail by providing for the procedure of publishing and coming into effect of laws and regulatory legal acts. The laws adopted by the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation must be submitted to be signed and published by the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive authority) within the stipulated term not to exceed 14 days. In case he rejects the law, the majority of delegates but at least two thirds of the stipulated number of delegates can approve of it in the previous version. In this case, the law cannot be rejected again and must be published within the stipulated terms.

The constitution (statute) and law of the constituent member of the Russian Federation come into force immediately after their official publication. Laws and other regulatory legal acts of the constituent member of the Russian Federation related to the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms come into force not earlier than ten days after their official publication.

The Law strictly defines a procedure of early termination of powers for the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federa-

tion. Its powers can be terminated early in the following cases: if it adopts a resolution on its voluntary dissolution; if its delegates divest themselves of their authorities; if the court recognizes the membership of the delegates as ineligible; if the authority fails to eliminate the incomppliance of the constitution (statute), law, or regulatory legal act issued by the constituent member of the Russian Federation with the Constitution of the Russian Federation or federal laws within a six-month term. In the latter case, the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation makes a decision on early termination of powers for the legislative authority. In case of early termination of the legislative authority's powers, snap elections are to be scheduled no later than within six months. However, the lawmakers fail to specify the person in charge of scheduling the snap elections to the legislative authority of Russia's member. The electoral commission from the constituent member of the Russian Federation is to be authorized to schedule snap elections to legislative bodies of the constituent member of the Russian Federation in such cases.

While quite animated discussions related to restrictions of activities and immunity of delegates from legislative bodies of the constituent member of the Russian Federation were held until recently, the Law cleared up this issue. Members of the legislative authority of the member have the parliamentary immunity for the term of their authorities. This is the most important legal guarantee of their activities.

Delegates of the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation may not be members of the State *Duma*. Moreover, according to the principle of separation of state powers, such delegates may not hold any state positions of the Russian Federation, state positions in federal state agencies, state positions of the constituent member of the Russian Federation, or state positions in state agencies in the constituent member of the Russian Federation regardless of whether they perform their functions as delegates on a professional and standing basis or along with their key activities.

According to the Federal Law, which legalized the immunity of members of the legislative authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation, they cannot be brought to any criminal or administrative responsibility in a judicial procedure, detained, arrested, or subjected to bodily search or interrogation without consent of the legislative authority except for cases when the member is detained *in flagrante delicto*. In addition, they cannot be subjected to personal inspection except for cases stipulated by the Federal Law to ensure the security of other people. Delegates' immunity applies to their housing and office facilities, luggage,

personal and office vehicles, correspondence and communications facilities used by them, as well as documents belonging to them.

Delegates of the legislative authority cannot be brought to any criminal or administrative responsibility for opinions they share and positions expressed at voting, as well as other actions corresponding to their status including upon expiration of the term of their powers. Delegates are entitled to refuse bearing witness related to civil or criminal cases on the circumstances that came to their notice in connection with the execution of their powers.

It is the public prosecutor of the constituent member of the Russian Federation who is to take a decision about depriving delegates of their immunity. To obtain concurrence from the legislative authority to bring a delegate to criminal or administrative responsibility in a judicial procedure, detain, arrest, or subject him or her to bodily search or interrogation except for cases when he or she is detained *in flagrante delicto*, the public prosecutor must apply to the legislative authority. The legislative authority is to examine the application no later than within 14 days.

Having provided for the parliamentary immunity presuming the full protection of delegates during the execution of their powers, the lawmakers also entitled subjects of the Russian Federation to withdraw immunity from a delegate on the basis of their constitutions (statutes).

As for executive authorities of the constituent member of the Russian Federation have the following structure: a system of executive authorities headed by the supreme executive authority chaired by its chief who is also the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. According to the fundamentals of the constitutional system and legal state principles, federal executive authorities and executive authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation make up the common system of executive power of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law provided for the supreme official to be elected by citizens of the Russian Federation residing in the constituent member's territory according to the electoral right principles as a part of the system of executive authorities in the constituent member. The Law constitutes that the supreme official may be elected for a term not to exceed five years and may hold the office for no more than two terms running. The constitution (statute) of the constituent member of the Russian Federation defines the name of the supreme official's position taking into account the historic, national, and other traditions in the given constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The supreme official represents the constituent member of the Russian Federation in relations with federal state authorities, state authorities of

constituent members of the Russian Federation, local self-government bodies, and when carrying out foreign economic relations. At the same time, he is entitled to sign contracts and agreements on behalf of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. According to the constituent member's legislation, he is entitled to form the supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation. When exercising his powers, the supreme official must comply with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member, as well as carry out decrees issued by the President of the Russian Federation and resolutions adopted by the Government of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law regulates issues related to early termination of supreme official's powers of the constituent member of the Russian Federation in detail. It provides as follows: resignation on his own will as well as in case of vote of non-confidence on the part of the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation; recognition of him as incapable, partly incapable, missing, or dead by the court; coming into legal force of a judgment of conviction against him passed by the court; his departure from Russia for permanent residence, loss of the citizenship of the Russian Federation, or his recall by voters of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The vote of non-confidence for the supreme official of the constituent member of the Russian Federation taken by at least two thirds of votes from the stipulated number of delegates results in prompt resignation for him and the supreme executive authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation headed by him. The key reasons for the vote of non-confidence for the supreme official are: his issue of any acts conflicting with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and failure to eliminate such contradictions established by the competent court within a month from the date of coming into force of the judicial decision, as well as other gross breaches of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, orders issued by the President of the Russian Federation, resolutions adopted by the Government of the Russian Federation, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation resulting in any large-scale infringement upon civil rights and freedoms.

The supreme executive state authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation is a standing body ensuring the compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, and other regulatory

legal acts of the Russian Federation, constitution (statute), laws, and other regulatory legal acts of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. The constitution (statute) and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation define the name and structure as well as procedure of the formation of the supreme executive authority in the constituent member taking into consideration its historic, national, and other traditions.

The lack of regulation and independent provision of powers to the supreme executive authority by each constituent member of the Russian Federation still results in inconsistency in the field of implementing their independency. At present the Federal Law strictly defines the key powers of the supreme executive state authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation in compliance with the principle of separation of state powers. It plans and takes measures aimed at all-round social and economic development of the constituent member as well as takes part in pursuing the common state policy in the field of finances, science, education, health care, social security, and ecology.

The supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation takes measures within the scope of its competence aimed at the implementation, provision and protection of human and civil rights and freedoms, property and public order protection, and crime control. Its key powers include the elaboration of the draft budget and draft programs of social and economic development of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and submission of such drafts, as well as reports on the budget implementation and performance of the said programs to the legislative authority of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. The head of the supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation is to submit all of the documents and materials to the legislative authority.

According to the Federal Law, the supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation is entitled to control and dispose of the subject's property in compliance with its laws as well as federal property transferred under control of the constituent member of the Russian Federation in compliance with federal laws and other regulatory legal acts. It is obvious that both laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation and federal laws are required to exercise such powers.

The supreme executive authority of the constituent member is entitled to form other executive authorities in the constituent member of the Russian Federation and conclude contracts with federal executive authorities about the delimitation of their competence and powers as well as agree-

ments on mutual transfer of a part of such powers in compliance with the Federal Law.

In spite of the independence of local self-governmental bodies, the supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation is entitled to take a legal action or instruct such bodies to harmonize legal acts issued by them and conflicting with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal legislation, constitution (statute), and legislation of the constituent member of the Russian Federation with legislation of the Federation and constituent member of the Russian Federation.

The lawmakers stipulated that such a scope of competence of the supreme executive state authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation was not limiting. The law provides for the possibility to exercise other powers stipulated by federal laws, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation, as well as agreements with federal executive authorities.

According to the Federal Law, the supreme official in the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive authority) issues decrees (resolutions) and gives instructions, which are binding upon the constituent member of the Russian Federation, on the basis and in pursuance of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, regulatory documents issued by the President of the Russian Federation, resolutions issued by the government of the Russian Federation, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. However, the Law fails to specify the person in charge of implementing the decrees (resolutions) and instructions. Apparently, they must implement them on their own.

When specifying that regulatory legal acts issued by the supreme official in the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive authority) and supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation must not conflict with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, decrees issued by the President of the Russian Federation, resolutions issued by the Government of the Russian Federation, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation, the Federal Law fails to stipulate directly what is to be done and what measures are to be taken in case this provision is violated. It is obviously possible to be governed here by similar provisions of Article 29 of the Law to a certain degree (in case of any contradiction not only with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws but also with international obligations and in cases when human and civil rights and freedoms are infringed).

Thus, in case the acts issued by the supreme official in the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive authority) and supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation conflict with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, decrees issued by the President of the Russian Federation, resolutions issued by the Government of the Russian Federation, constitution (statute), and laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation, the President of the Russian Federation must suspend the acts issued by the executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Article 85) until the competent court settles this issue and the legislative authority takes the vote of non-confidence for it. In addition, Article 29 of the Law enables the supreme official (head of the supreme executive authority) and executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation to cancel the act suspended by the President of the Russian Federation.

The mechanism of separation of powers results in the establishment of a strong system of executive and legislative authorities at the federal and regional levels. Under such conditions, it is important to establish correct and principal relations between them and keep the balance of powers to ensure the stability of the democratic society and state system as well as make the activities of both branches of power more efficient. That is why the Federal Law pays much attention to the problem of mutual relations among legislative, supreme official, and supreme executive authority in constituent members of the Russian Federation.

According to the constitutional principle of the separation of state powers, the legislative authority and supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation exercise their powers independently and interact in the forms stipulated by the law for efficient management of processes of the economic and social development in the constituent member of the Russian Federation and in the interests of its population.

The supreme official (head of the supreme executive authority) is entitled to provide the legislative authority of the constituent member with a proposal about making changes to or amendments of resolutions issued by the legislative authority or their withdrawal, as well as to appeal against the aforesaid resolutions in a judicial procedure. The legislative authority is provided with the same powers with regard to legal acts issued by the supreme official (head of the supreme executive authority) or executive authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation.

The Federal Law stipulates that the legislative authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation must forward plans of lawmaking activities and draft laws of the constituent member to the supreme official in the constituent member of the Russian Federation (head of the supreme executive authority). We think that all executive authorities in the constituent member of the Russian Federation must take an active part in the development of plans of lawmaking activities and preparing draft laws of the constituent member of the Russian Federation. Moreover, the Law should have provided for conciliation procedures and establishment of conciliation commission by both branches of power as early as at the stage when the drafts are being prepared, instead of waiting until there are any discrepancies or disputes to be settled by judicial means.

It is not quite clear why heads (plenipotentiaries) of executive authorities in the constituent members are entitled to take part in sessions of legislative bodies with the right of consultative vote. At the same time, delegates and representatives of legislative authorities are not entitled to take part in activities of executive authorities in the constituent member of the Russian Federation. This omission in the Federal Law must be taken into account in the law of the constituent member of the Russian Federation.

According to the Federal Law, the legislative authority can take part in the formation of the supreme executive authority in the constituent member of the Russian Federation, approval or coordination of the appointment of individual officials, as well as coordination of the appointment of the heads of territorial and federal executive authorities (if provided by the law). To be sure, such forms of participation of the legislative authority of the constituent member need serious workout and the constituent member of the Russian Federation must adopt a number of laws because the efficient implementation of the right provided by the Law to take the vote of non-confidence for heads of executive authorities of the constituent member that were appointed with their participation will depend on this. It must define the consequences for taking the vote of non-confidence for such heads to the extent of their dismissal.

Chapter 5 of the Law regulating issues related to ensuring the legitimate activities of state authorities in the constituent member of the Russian Federation reproduces powers of the Prosecutor's Office in charge of supervision over the legislative execution from the Federal Constitutional Law on the Prosecutor's Office. It even regulates actions to be taken by the Prosecutor's Office to appeal against the legal acts adopted by constituent members of the Russian Federation that conflict with the law. Meanwhile, the Federal Constitutional Law *On the Prosecutor's Office of*

the Russian Federation (adopted on January 17, 1992 with amendments and changes of November 17, 1995 and February 10, 1999) features the same provision as well. Was it worth copying the provision out of the Federal Constitutional Law as well as clause 2, Article 85 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, while the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation must supervise over the compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the laws currently in effect in the territory of Russia?

Chapter 5 also comprises Article 28, which is declarative by its nature and says that officials from executive authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation bear responsibility as provided by federal laws and laws adopted by the constituent member of the Russian Federation. What are the breaches they are responsible for? There is no answer. We can only guess because previous articles note more than once that the legislative authority, supreme official and executive authorities in the constituent member of the Russian Federation ensure the compliance with the Constitution and laws of the Russian Federation when exercising their powers.

In spite of a somewhat unfinished and declarative character of some of the articles, repetitions and reproductions of individual constitutional provisions and provisions from federal constitutional laws, the Federal Law *On general principles of organizing legislative (representative) and executive state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation* regulates issues related to the organization and activities of state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation as well as lawmaking-related issues. It also solves the vexed and important problem of mutual relations between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation, as well as legislative and executive powers of the constituent member to a certain degree. The value of the Law is not only in the aforementioned facts but also in securing the unity of the federative state and integrity of its territory as well as preserving the common constitutional space and developing federalism principles.

Having fixed the principles of integrity and inviolability of the Russian territory and sovereignty as well as self-government of peoples of the Russian Federation (Clauses 1 and 3, Article 4; Clause 3, Article 5), the Constitution of the Russian Federation rules out any secession, that is, the unilateral right of any constituent member to withdraw from the Federation. At the same time, the Constitution does not exclude a possibility of expanding or changing the number of constituent members forming a part

of the Russian Federation at the expense of affiliating or forming a new constituent member of the Russian Federation (Clause 2, Article 65). However, this is to be regulated based on the procedure stipulated by the Federal Constitutional Law *On the procedure of the incorporation into the Russian Federation and the formation of a new constituent member within the Russian Federation* (December 17, 2001). A new constituent member can be affiliated to the Russian Federation not only in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Federal Constitutional Law but also international (intergovernmental) agreements made by the Russian Federation.

The Federal Constitutional Law stipulates for the key requirements and conditions for affiliating and forming a new constituent member in the Russian Federation. Without adherence to them, the procedures of affiliating and forming a new constituent member cannot be recognized as legitimate. The principles formulated by the Law include voluntariness, mutual consent, and observance of the state interests and principles of the Russian federative system; human and civil rights and freedoms; as well as existing historic, economic, and cultural links between the constituent members of the Federation and their social and economic opportunities. At the same time, it is the foreign state that is to demonstrate its initiative to be affiliated to the Russian Federation.

The foreign state affiliated to the Russian Federation as a new constituent member is provided with republican status unless otherwise stipulated by the international (intergovernmental) treaty; if a part of the foreign state joins the Russian Federation, it is provided with the status of any constituent member of the Federation in accordance with the international treaty. According to the Law, a new constituent member of the Russian Federation can be created as a result of association of two or more adjoining constituent members of the Russian Federation upon the initiative of the concerned constituent members.

The Federal Constitutional Law under consideration stipulates that the key document regulating the issues related to affiliating a new constituent member to the Russian Federation is the international treaty. The Russian Federation and the foreign state can sign special protocols on some issues related to the affiliation of the foreign state or its part to the Russian Federation as a new constituent member to be ratified along with ratification of the international treaty. The international treaty must regulate the issues related to the name and status of the new constituent member of the Federation, procedure of acquiring the citizenship of the Russian Federation by citizens of the foreign state, operation of the law of the Russian Federa-

tion in the territory of the new constituent member of the Federation, and activities of state authorities and local self-government bodies of the foreign state in the territory of the new constituent member of the Russian Federation without fail.

The lawmakers provide that the international treaty can establish a transition period during which the new constituent member must be integrated into the economic, financial, credit, and legal systems of the Russian Federation, as well as its system of state authorities. Along with the ratification of the international treaty, it is necessary to submit a draft federal constitutional law on the affiliation of the new constituent member to the Russian Federation comprising provisions that define the name, status, and borders of the new constituent member, as well as concluding and transitional provisions following from the international treaty and protocols to it to the State *Duma*.

The Law also regulates in detail the procedure for forming a new constituent member as a part of Russia. The related parties are to prepare and submit a motivated proposal on the need to form a new constituent member as a part of the Russian Federation to the President of the Russian Federation. It is to reflect the expected name, status, and borders of the new constituent member and include the forecast of social, economic, and other consequences related to the formation of the new constituent member. In addition, materials containing suggestions about the legal succession of the new constituent member concerning the property of the concerned constituent members, relations with federal state authorities and other constituent members, as well as about activities of state organs and organizations, operation of laws, and other regulatory acts of the concerned constituent members in the territory of the new constituent member, and about the formation of state authorities of the new constituent member must be attached to the document. To ensure the normal operation of the new constituent member, the lawmakers provide for the possibility to make amendments and addenda to the Federal Law about the current-year federal budget or proposals regarding the federal budget for the next year.

The referendum held by the related constituent members in compliance with their laws about referendums and within the terms stipulated by them enjoys the prerogative right to solve the issue related to the formation of a new constituent member as a part of Russia. The issue about the formation of the new constituent member can be solved positively only when approved by referendums held in all of the related constituent members. If at least one of the related constituent members fails to approve of the idea,

repeated referendums can be held in all of the related constituent members no earlier than in a year.

In case the referendums on the formation of the new constituent member as a part of Russia held in the related constituent members approve of this, it is necessary to prepare a draft constitutional law and the President of the Russian Federation is to submit it to the State *Duma*. The draft must reflect and regulate all of the issues reflected in proposals of the related constituent members about the formation of the new constituent member as a part of the Federation.

Apparently, it is not accidental that the lawmakers provide for the formation of a new constituent member as a part of Russia by the related constituent members. The current constituent members of the Russian Federation that were formed based on the old administrative and territorial division of the country of the 1930s–1950s still represent the old fractional territory of the country. The 89 constituent members of the Russian Federation divided into six types differ not only by their territory and population, but also by the key indices and level of their social and economic development, as well as their potential.

As a result, the national economic space is still very “mosaic,” which impedes the uniform development of market relations as well as efficient use of budget funds and national resources, and produces social tension in the region. Moreover, each of these unit fractions is characterized by the “monocentric” management system, which complicates the use of the state powers division principle and efficient use and execution of federal laws, as well as violates principles of staff selection and placement. The current regional association of *krais*, *oblasts*, and republics (with their uncertain status and inefficient resolutions) has no evident effect not only on the social and economic situation for constituent members of the Russian Federation but also on the development of economic links among them.

As constituent members of the Russian Federation developed, the control over them on the part of the center was essentially weakened, especially as they switched to the system of election of their leaders, while most of them came from the former political elite with the inborn genetic code of conformism and psychology of the former power; other leaders who came to power in regions (who represented a so-called “democratic direction”) were of the charismatic and authoritative nature. Problems of the local government were also stipulated by the fact that the formation of the political system in the country coincided with the initial state of switching to market relations and is still going on in the conditions of our Russian mentality of legal nihilism.

In a situation like this, the President of the Russian Federation had to introduce an institute of plenipotentiaries of the Russian President in constituent members of the Russian Federation (in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation), gradually expanding their powers by charging them with additional functions for coordinating the activities of federal structures in constituent members of the Russian Federation. However, the practice of plenipotentiaries of the Russian President working in constituent members of the Russian Federation showed that although they were officials from the Russian President's administration, they failed to balance the state administration or produce any essential effect on the execution of federal laws in regions or on the improvement of local government and relations between federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation. Reasons explaining their "helplessness" were as follows: plenipotentiaries of the Russian President were unable to have an effect on the regional economy or to control the finances, and in some regions plenipotentiaries appointed according to the recommendations made by heads of constituent members of the Russian Federation were not professional and authoritative enough and were confined and dependent on these persons in their actions.

These were features characteristic of the state administration system and Russian statehood of the late twentieth century, which reflected the political and economic development of the country. Under these conditions, the new Russian President—Vladimir Putin—launched reforms of the political system of the Russian society and improvement of federative relations right away (in early 2000), thus pursuing major goals—strengthening of the Russian statehood, formation of a true federative state, and continuation of the market reform. The Russian President began strengthening the federalism via forming seven federal *okrugs* in the territory of the Russian Federation headed by plenipotentiaries of the Russian President. Therefore, by amalgamating the presidential vertical structures in the regions and actually establishing territorial administration, he drew actual federal power nearer to regions. Plenipotentiaries of the Russian President in these *okrugs* were entrusted with the task to render assistance to the efficient resolution of the development problems in the *okrugs*.

In view of the fact that the major goal to be set was the goal of state modernization comprising the improvement of federative relations and federalism by forming federal *okrugs* as the initial state, we can assume that federal *okrugs* will form the basis for a modernized state, that is, the modernized federative Russian state. In this case, the federal *okrug* development can follow two major directions in the future. The first one is the

formation and development of territorial federal *okrugs* (as links in the presidential vertical) as major links of the state administration apparatus regulating federal relations and links between the center and constituent members of the Russian Federation. Then there will be a problem of possible bureaucratization and centralization of administration at the *okrug* level or as a temporary measure for achieving the tactical goal (in a way similar to the situation of 1928–1934).

The second direction is the consistent and stage-by-stage implementation of the state modernization task, which can be achieved by establishing authorities (economic, branch, infrastructure, social ones, etc.) and political administration system (*okrug* authorities) in federal *okrugs*, like it was in the late 1920s–early 1930s. Reformers assume that this help solve an essential social problem—problem of real equalization of opportunities for constituent members of the Russian Federation in order to provide Russian citizens with all political, social and economic rights. The federal *okrug* development in this direction can result in the principal modification of its status as the status of a constituent member of the Russian Federation.

In its turn, this can cause a need to modify the administrative and territorial system as well as the system of state authorities in the country, and result in the formation of a single type of constituent members of the Russian Federation built based on the territorial principle.

Russian *krais* and *oblasts* have been able to receive the status of constituent members of the Russian Federation since the 1990s (when the Declaration on the State Sovereignty of the RSFSR and Federal Treaty were adopted, and the very name of “RSFSR” was changed), which supplemented the national and territorial principle of the federation with a territorial principle. After the Constitution of the Russian Federation was adopted in 1993, essential amendments were introduced to the legal status of constituent members of the Russian Federation. The Constitution of the Russian Federation proclaimed equal rights for all constituent members of the Russian Federation in their mutual relations and equal rights for all constituent members of the Russian Federation in their relations with federal state authorities, which legally abolished the division of constituent members of the Russian Federation into different groups by the scope of authorities and actual differences among them.

The statehood of national republics (their economy and social and political system were formed in close interrelationship with Russia) is developing as a federative structure with elements of ethnic federalism. Thus, irrespective of the way territorial federal *okrugs* will develop and of pros-

pects for separate types of constituent members of the Russian Federation, I strongly believe that national republics, which have historically formed based on ethnic and territorial principles, will preserve their national and state status in the single economic, political, and legal space of Russia. This is also stipulated by the fact that national republics (just like the country on the whole) have historically pursued the multinational policy and do not protect only the titular nation's interests.

Loyal to its historical tradition, Kalmykia legislated in the Steppe Code (Constitution): "Republic of Kalmykia promotes the preservation of the identity and ethnic uniqueness as well as traditions of Kalmyk, Russian and other nations in the republic in every possible way..." contributes to "the development of cultures of Russian and other nations residing in the Republic of Kalmykia on the basis of equal international and cultural interaction."

According to the Steppe Code, the Kalmyk people act as the sole source of power and its carrier. This recognition of the nation as the carrier of all power is an expression of national sovereignty, which means the absolute power of people, that is, the possession of social, economic, and political means for the Kalmyk people to participate actually in the control over social and republican affairs. The Kalmyk people exercise their power both directly (through referendums and free elections, as the utmost expression of power) and via republican state authorities and local self-government bodies.

Human rights and freedom of Russian citizens in the Republic of Kalmykia and guarantees of their implementation are equal for all people regardless of their nationality; that is, there is no infringement of any rights or liberties of peoples and Kalmyk nationalities. The republic complies with provisions of the Constitution of the Russian Federation proclaiming the unity of the Russian citizenship, state authority system, economic and legal space of the Russian Federation, as well as local self-government in the Russian Federation.

Based on the principles of Russia's constitutional system, the Steppe Code of Kalmykia defines the status of the Republic of Kalmykia as a national state and an equal constituent member of the Russian Federation, governed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws, the sovereignty of the Russian Federation prevailing in its territory. When the Steppe Code was adopted in compliance with the constitutional principles, they were obviously trying to preserve the inviolability of the foundations of the constitutional system in the Russian Federation. The goal was to make the Constitution of the Russian Federation indisputable,

stable and honored. The Kalmyk people do not want it to become an analogue of the 1936 Constitution of the USSR, when a great crime was committed in the Soviet Union using the Constitution as a cover.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation does not only proclaim but also acts as a guarantor of observance and execution of human rights and freedoms of Russian citizens. Due to the Constitution, there is step-by-step rehabilitation of groundlessly repressed peoples beginning with the Declaration of the Supreme Council of the USSR *On recognizing repression acts against forcibly resettled peoples as illegal and culpable and on providing these peoples with rights* (November 14, 1989).⁷ Being a successor of the former Soviet Union, the Russian Federation has been steadily pursuing the policy of rehabilitation since the very first days of its existence. One of the first normative and legal acts adopted in Russia to blame the tyranny and lawlessness at the state level with respect to many peoples and to restore historical justice and cancel all illegal acts passed with regard to repressed peoples was the Law of the RSFSR *On Political Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples*, which was passed by the Supreme Council of the RSFSR on April 26, 1991.⁸

This Law of the RSFSR recognized the following peoples as repressed: peoples that suffered from the policy of detraction and genocide accompanied by their forced resettlement, abolition of national and state formations, reshaping of their national and territorial borders, and establishment of the regimen of terror and violence in special settlements based on their belonging to certain national or other groups (in 2001 rehabilitation documents were issued to 84,446 Kalmyk citizens including those who suffered from repressions due to their nationality—80,040, those who suffered from repressions due to their political views—2,103, due to their belonging to a certain class—2,303, as well as 4,436 persons who were recognized as victims of political repression). The rehabilitation of repressed peoples was based on the *territorial* principle—recognition and execution of their right to restore the territorial integrity that existed before the anti-constitutional policy of the forced reshaping of borders was pursued (however, to solve this problem, legislators provided the Supreme Council of the RSFSR with the right to establish a transition period, so the same year the Supreme Council of the RSFSR declared a moratorium on the resolution of territorial problems for a five-year term); on the *political* principle—restoration of illegally abolished national and state formations according to the legally stipulated procedure, as well as the right to free national development for peoples that had no national or state formations; on the *material* principle—step-by-step reimbursement of losses incurred

on the repressed peoples and individuals by the state; on the *social* principle—the period when the repressed peoples had to reside in special settlements is to be threefold in the work record, and increased retirement pensions are provided; on the *cultural* principle—a set of measures is to be taken to restore their spiritual heritage and satisfy their cultural needs, as well as to rename population centers and populated areas giving them former historic names back.

In addition, legislators provided a possibility to adopt separate legislative acts of the RSFSR with regard to each repressed people on an individual basis. One of such legislative acts was the Decree issued by the President of the Russian Federation *On measures for rehabilitating the Kalmyk people and rendering state assistance for its revival*, which was passed on December 25, 1993 in view of the fiftieth anniversary of the deportation of the Kalmyk people. The Decree is of great legal, practical, and moral value. This document is aimed at further social, economic, and cultural development of the republic and covers a set of measures for final rehabilitation of the Kalmyk people and provision of material compensations for repressed people and their children who were born in special settlements.

The Decree entrusted the related federal ministries, departments, and executive authorities (jointly with Kalmyk state authorities) of certain constituent members of the Russian Federation including cities of the federal significance with defining a list of spiritual, cultural, and cult values that are the common property of the Kalmyk people (that used to belong to the republic before) and that are stored in museums, libraries, and other organizations and institutions of the Russian Federation, and with determining legal, financial, and material terms and conditions for their transfer to the Republic of Kalmykia.

When restoring the historical justice 50 years later and taking measures to eliminate the consequences of the illegal deportation and infringement of the Kalmyk people's rights, the leader of the Russian state recognized officially that an awful crime had been committed with regard to the Kalmyk people when the Kalmyk people had been resettled illegally and suffered from political repressions based on the national principle.⁹ Unfortunately, economic problems Russia has faced for the past decades made it impossible to execute federal laws and normative and legal acts in full, especially in the part related to the social, economic, cultural, and spiritual revival of the Kalmyk people. That is why the legal regulation of the rehabilitation process for repressed peoples has remained one of the most urgent problems of regulation of national relations. A package of legisla-

tive acts was to be passed in compliance with the Law of the RSFSR *On Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples*.

This problem must also be solved in the implementation of the State National Policy Concept of the Russian Federation (approved by the Russian President on June 15, 1996) based on the principles of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and generally recognized international law provisions. Its major goals are to provide conditions for full social, national, and cultural development of all peoples of Russia, to strengthen the all-Russian civil, spiritual, and moral unity based on observance of human rights and civil freedoms, and recognition of the man as the greatest value.

The major objectives of the state national policy are as follows: *in the political, public and legal sphere*—forming the Federation that would comply with the current social, economic, and political realities and historical experience of Russia by developing and intensifying federative relations; *in the social and economic sphere*—acting in the economic interests of peoples in accordance with the state regional policy and based on their traditional forms of economy and work experience, as well as aligning levels of the social and economic development of constituent members of the Russian Federation; *in the spiritual sphere*—spreading knowledge about the history and culture of the peoples residing in the Russian Federation, preserving the historical heritage and further developing the national uniqueness and traditions of interaction among Russian peoples, forming the social atmosphere of respect for their cultural values, providing the optimum conditions for the preservation and development of languages of all Russian peoples, using the Russian language as the official language, as well as taking into account the interrelations among national customs, traditions, rites, and religion, supporting the efforts taken by religious organizations in their peacemaking activities; *in the foreign policy sphere*—contributing to the process of reintegration on the new basis for former USSR's republics in the political, economic, and spiritual sphere.

When placing the priority emphasis on the improvement of federative relations, the state national policy defines the uniqueness of the Russian federalism development as a combination of territorial and national foundations acting as an actual embodiment of freedom and democracy in the improvement of life conditions for Russian peoples and territories, which can bring the power and government nearer to particular local communities taking into account their specific features and needs.

The new structure of Russian federalism defined in the State National Policy Concept also stipulates the establishment of the cultural and national autonomy institute. However, this institute is to be established in

addition to the system of national and state formations, as civil rights and freedoms related to the nationalities can be exercised and used only on the basis of multivariate forms of national and cultural self-determination and self-organization of peoples in the Russian Federation and based on the isolated residence of many peoples in the territory of Russia. According to the Constitution, the national and cultural autonomy is to become one of such forms of self-determination, as it will enable citizens of the Russian Federation belonging to different national communities (in particular, isolated peoples or peoples small in number, and ethnic minorities) to solve problems of preserving and developing their uniqueness, traditions, language, culture, and education.

Thus, by securing the state national policy principles the Constitution defined its major goals and objectives, ways for developing new federative relations, national relations, national, and cultural self-determination for the peoples of Russia, main directions for programs of their development and international cooperation, as well as mechanisms for pursuing the national policy. The Concept built a legal, ideological, and political basis for activities of federal state authorities and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation, political and public organizations in the field of national relations.

Almost at the same time, on July 17, 1996, they passed the Federal Law *On the National and Cultural Autonomy*, which stipulated a new model for legal regulation of national relations. Without binding each people to some particular territory, this Law provides actual equal rights for people belonging to different ethnic groups and all other peoples surrounding them, consistent execution of human rights and freedoms related to belonging to some national group.

The Law of the RSFSR *On Languages of Peoples of the RSFSR* (October 25, 1991) and the Federal Law *On the Introduction of Amendments and Addenda to the Law of the RSFSR On Languages of Peoples of the RSFSR* (July 27, 1998) were of fundamentally essential value for the development of national relations, culture, and languages of the peoples of Russia. Languages of peoples of the Russian Federation were declared to be the national property of the Russian state and to be under its protection. The Federal Law is aimed at the formation of conditions for the preservation as well as equal and unique development of languages of different peoples of Russia, at the formation of the legal base for implementing the provisions of the Law.

The Federal Law provides all peoples of Russia with equal rights to the preservation and comprehensive development, use of the native language,

freedom of choice and use of languages for communication, as well as the right to the free selection of education, training, and art irrespective of the origin, social or property status, race, nationality, sex, education, religion, and place of residence.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the official language of the Russian Federation is Russian in the whole territory of Russia, and in republics the language of the titular nationality can also be given a status of the official language. Irrespective of this provision, all constituent members of the Russian Federation are entitled to adopt laws and other normative and legal acts to protect their residents' rights to the free selection of languages for communication, education, training, and art.

It should be noted that the current language legislation (including legislation in the Republic of Kalmykia) mainly reflects a public and legal aspect of the regulation of language relations. At the same time, the sociocultural aspect was not reflected in it enough. Meanwhile, the growth of national consciousness has an effect on the attitude to the national language, which needs to be provided with both spheres for usage and conditions for its development and preservation as a part of the national cultural heritage. Therefore, the general direction of the language policy is mainly determined by the state of the economy in the country and constituent members of the Russian Federation, as well as their capacity for solving the problems of financing.

Problems of language relations should obviously be solved in a complex with the regional program aimed at the national development and expansion of international cooperation among Peoples of Russia. This program will also be of great value for strengthening federalism as it will establish the economic foundation for both national and federative relations.

At the current stage, the development of both federative and national relations requires measures of the political, legal, and economic nature ensuring state assistance and promotion of the economic activity in the regions, as well as alignment of levels of the social and economic development for constituent members of the Russian Federation.

It is generally known what problematic heritage was given to the current Republic of Kalmykia: its economy, which is monopolized by the state down to the limit, specializes in sheep breeding and is aimed at the exportation of raw materials. Thus, it found itself in hard initial conditions when switching to market relations as well as in a protracted crisis, which has generally defined the economic and social state of the republic for the past decade.

Kalmykia is still a traditionally agrarian republic. The main source of its economic well-being has always been cattle breeding (mainly sheep and bovine animals), horse breeding, pig breeding, and poultry farming. Some of its districts deal with farming as well. The industry represented by low-yield enterprises of the food, petroleum refining, and fishing industries has only a small share in the republican economy.

The agroindustrial complex of the republic is in a protracted crisis now. In 1993–2000 the sheep stock in farms of all categories reduced from 2,833,200 down to 634,200 head, that is, 4.47 times (in the Russian Federation 3.67 times); the cattle stock from 327,200 down to 121,600 head (2.7 times; in the Russian Federation 1.9 times); the pig stock from 71,600 down to 41,800 head (1.7 times; in the Russian Federation 1.7 times); the horse stock from 21,400 down to 5,300 head (4 times); the poultry stock from 847,200 down to 762,700 (1.1 times), and the poultry stock in agricultural companies reduced from 430,500 down to 156,400 (2.75 times; in the Russian Federation 1.5 times).¹⁰

The reduction of the cattle stock from 3,232,000 down to 797,600 head during these years, that is, 4 times (in the Russian Federation 2.6 times), reduction of cultivated areas from 664,000 down to 257,200 ha, that is, 2.5 times (cultivated areas with cereal crops reduced from 402,800 down to 183,000 ha, i.e., 2.25 times) as well as reduction of cultivated areas with feed crops from 240,500 down to 39,400 ha, that is, 6.1 times (the amount of mineral and organic fertilizers for seeds reduced 5.3 and 27 times, respectively) resulted in the reduction of the agricultural production.

The material and technical infrastructure in agriculture also sagged considerably during the same period (the number of tractors reduced from 7,552 down to 3,218, i.e., 2.4 times; the number of motor trucks from 4,783 down to 2,550, i.e., 1.9 times; the number of grain combine harvesters from 1,731 down to 1,015, i.e., 1.7 times; the number of feed combine harvesters from 531 down to 128, i.e., 4.1 times; consumption of electrical energy for industrial purposes reduced from 378.8 mln kW/hour down to 143.9 million kW/hour, i.e., 2.6 times). Not only the agricultural production reduced during these years—the prime cost of agricultural products and profitability also reduced, and the share of losing agricultural enterprises became four times as much and is 50% now. The average annual number of workers employed in the agriculture reduced from 38,900 down to 17,900, that is, 2.2 times. The accounts payable (924 million rubles in late 1999, which is much more than the cost of basic production assets of agricultural enterprises) and receivable as well as amounts of mutual settlements increased.¹¹

The total yield of grain reduced from 793,900 tons in 1993 (which was a fruitful year) down to 215,300 tons in 2000, that is, 3.73 times (in the Russian Federation 1.6 times); meat production (slaughter weight) reduced from 52,200 down to 7,200 tons, that is, 7.2 times (in the Russian Federation 1.3 times), and in agricultural enterprises from 18,000 down to 2,600 tons, that is, almost 7 times; industrial meat yield reduced 14 times (from 17,900 down to 1,300 tons); milk production reduced from 107,600 down to 29,320 tons, that is, 3.7 times (in the Russian Federation 1.5 times), and in agricultural enterprises from 21,800 down to 3,100 tons, that is, 7 times; egg production from 66.1 million down to 30.4 million pieces, that is, 2.2 times (in the Russian Federation 1.3 times); wool production from 14,500 down to 1,450 tons, that is, 10 times.¹²

The cattle and poultry yield also reduced during these years (the milk yield reduced from 1,562 down to 1,286 kg; average egg-laying capacity of laying hens from 187 down to 182 pieces; wool clip per sheep from 5.2 to 3.5 kg); the yield of cereal crops reduced from 19.7 down to 11.8 *centners*. Low availability of fodder also had an effect on the livestock yield. In 1999 and 2000, it was lower per cattle head in agricultural enterprises of Kalmykia than in the country on the whole (in centers of fodder units) in 1.7 and 1.5 times, respectively.¹³

There were no essential changes in the structure of agricultural production by economic branches during these years. While in 1993 the share of agricultural enterprises was 53%, individual households—43%, farms—4%, in 1999 it was 47.48%, 48.5%, and 4.02%, respectively, though the number of farms increased from 1,015 to 1,803 during the same period (their number remained almost at the level of 1997 by 2000), and their ground area reduced from 681,100 down to 613,600 ha.

Thus, in 1993–2000 the rates of the cattle stock decline and agricultural production was considerably higher in the republic than in the country on the whole and the Volga region. The quantitative recession of the republic economy is accompanied by great deterioration of quality (yield and animal yield decrease, etc.). The capital-to-labor ratio in the Kalmyk agriculture was five times as low as the average Russian level. The food resources in animal breeding were also scarce (6.9 *centners* of fodder units were provided per cattle head, while this index in Russia was 11.3).

The republic industry ranks last among the regions of the Volga Economic District by the overall production, and no improvement trends have been observed for quite a long time (even if we compare 1999 with 1998, the industrial production reduced by 17.2% in Kalmykia and increased by 7.8% in the Russian Federation, while in neighboring constituent mem-

bers of the Russian Federation the growth made up from 12.6% to 26.1%). From 1993 to late 2000, the oil production in the republic reduced from 425,300 down to 199,300 tons (2.13 times); the natural gas production from 162.5 million down to 59.7 million cubic meters (2.7 times).¹⁴

The production of building materials is actually in the state of depression (though it recovered a little during the years of preparation and process of the Chess Olympiad). The growth of industrial production as well as light and food industries has been observed for the past two years (1999–2000). However, the flour production reduced in two times during the same period, and the compound feed production by 1.3 times. The available large wool and leather processing enterprises are idle now due to the absence of raw materials. The specific share of losing enterprises and organizations in major economy branches increased from 20.4% to 63.1% by 1999 as compared to 1993, that is, by 3 times (in the industry from 19.1% to 72.2%; in the agriculture from 11.5% to 57.5%; in the construction industry from 4.4% to 78.4%; in the trade and public catering from 38.8% to 68%; in the transport industry from 20% to 42.5%, etc.).

Due to the trying situation in the economy, the general unemployment actually increased from 5.1% to 23.1%, that is, 4.5 times (in the Russian Federation 11.7%), and the registered unemployment made up 2.8% in 2000 (in the Russian Federation 1.7%).¹⁵

Money flow (on average per capita) considerably increased in 2000 as compared in 1999 and made up 1,295.24 rubles (in the Russian Federation 1,720 rubles). The minimum subsistence income per capita was 772.3 rubles in 2000 in the republic (in the Russian Federation 903 rubles). The average number of persons with monthly incomes lower than the minimum subsistence level made up 164,573 in 2000, or 52.4% (in the Russian Federation, in 1999, 34.1%).¹⁶

The population size in the republic reduced from 321,700 to 315,700 persons from 1993 to late 2000 (almost by 2%), and the average annual balance of migration is minus 1,600–1,700 now. The demographic situation somewhat worsened in the republic during these years. The number of newborn per 1,000 people reduced from 15.7 to 11.1 in 2000 as compared to 1993, and the number of the deceased increased from 9.9 to 11, so the natural growth of population reduced from 5.8 down to 0.1.

During all these years the residential construction was at the level of 1992–1993 (62,400–50,000 m²), except for 2000 when 36,000 m² of housing were commissioned. However, all these building activities were mostly carried out by individuals. While in 1992 the specific share of residential buildings in the total amount of housing commissioned by in-

dividuals was 18.4%, in 1999 it was as much as 58.7%. This is explained by the fact that residential buildings were mainly built in towns and urban-type villages. While in 1992–1993 the residential construction prevailed in villages (63.7%–53.3%), in 1999 as many as 93.5% were built in towns and urban-type villages, and only 6.5% were built in the rural area (mainly by individuals).¹⁷

Financing for the development of the republican economy naturally reduced in the conditions of market relations. Whereas in 1993 the expenses for the development of the republic economy were equal to 40.1% of the total amount of budget expenses, in 2000 expenses for the maintenance of certain economy branches and facilities made up only 20.2% in the consolidated budget structure of expenses. At the same time, expenses for the maintenance of state authorities in the republic grew considerably. In 1994, the share of budget expenses for the maintenance of state authorities was 4.1%, and in 2000 these expenses almost doubled to reach 9.4%.¹⁸

When the President of the Republic of Kalmykia went to the polls and assumed the office in April 1993, he set the goal to reduce and improve the republican administrative machinery. On the very first day of his being in office, on April 23, he signed the Decree on the Abolition of Republican Ministries and State Committees. According to this document, eight ministries and 12 state committees were abolished. Only two ministries remained out of ten (agricultural and internal affairs ones), and new ministries were formed (ministries of industry, economy and finances, and social policy). The powers of the Ministry of Industry were soon delegated to the Kalmykia State Industrial and Financial Investment Corporation. Due to this abolition and reorganization of ministries and departments, the republican administrative staff reduced by one third then.

When defining the system of republican state authorities, the Steppe Code (Constitution) of 1994 did not stipulate the formation of the republican government since all of its functions and powers were delegated to the President of the Republic of Kalmykia, that is, to the chief executive authority in the republic (the republic's executive authority being a part of Russia's common system of executive authorities), and to his administration. However, in view of the considerable volume of work for the President (a member of the Council of Federation at the federal level, President of the World Chess Federation at the international level) a decision was taken to establish an executive and administrative body under the President of the Republic. A goal was also set not to increase the administrative machinery and expenses for its maintenance and not to complicate the executive power structure in the republic. At the same time, this body was

to concentrate on operative management and control over the social, economic, and cultural development, as well as on the reform that was being implemented in the republic.

In accordance with the republican Law on the Government of the Republic of Kalmykia adopted on June 6, 1994, the republic's President, who is also the chief executive authority, is entitled to form the government and chair it or appoint the government's chairman upon an agreement with the republic's People's *Khural* (Parliament). According to the Law, the President formed the first government of the post-reform period comprising 11 persons headed by the Vice-President of the Republic of Kalmykia on the same day, on June 6, 1994.

The apparatus of the President's administration, which was in charge of control and systematic inspections of the implementation of the republican government's decrees and orders, was initially in charge of preparation of issues to be examined at sessions of the republican government. Later, as the government membership gradually became greater in number, these functions were delegated to its own apparatus—the Administrative Department. In 1995, the government comprised as many as 19 members including the chairman, two first deputies and three vice-chairmen, 12 ministers, and the chairman of the National Bank.

By the end of 2001 the government of the Republic of Kalmykia was formed in the amount of 26 members including the chairman, two first deputies, four vice-chairmen, 19 ministers, chairman of the State Land Committee, and the military commissar of the republic.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (part 2, Article 77) and Federal Law of October 6, 1999 *On general principles of the formation of legislative (representative) and executive state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation* (Clause 3, Article 17), the government of the Republic of Kalmykia forms a part of the common executive power system of the Russian Federation. Yet this common executive power system of the country is built within the sphere of public relations regulated by both the Federation and its constituent members according to the Constitution (i.e., it falls within the competence of the Russian Federation and common competence), as well as based on principles of separation of state powers but not on principles of democratic centralism.

In practice, this means that the government of the Russian Federation heading the executive power system in the Federation is entitled to coordinate the activities of executive authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation, examine their proposals including proposals about drafts of its resolutions on matters falling within the common competence

of the Russian Federation and its constituent members, and exercise control over their activities as to the matters falling within the competence of the Russian Federation. It can only put forth proposals for the President of the Russian Federation to suspend the acts issued by executive authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation in case they conflict with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws or international obligations undertaken by the country, or they infringe upon human and civil rights and freedoms of the Russian Federation, as well as to initiate the cancellation of such acts by judicial means.

Due to the fact that neither the Steppe Code nor Federal Law *On general principles of the formation of legislative (representative) and executive state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation* restrict the powers of the leader of the Federation's constituent member (in this case, Kalmykia) by any particular exhaustive list, the President of the Republic of Kalmykia delegates some of his powers (except for powers of the prerogative nature) to the government of the Republic of Kalmykia and defines its powers in a special normative and legal act.

Taking into account the special status of the republican government as an executive and regulatory body under the president of the Republic of Kalmykia, the Steppe Code does not define its competence even in general. The competence of the republican government arising out of problems of the republican administration (as a constituent member) and common administration of the Russian Federation and its constituent members (Article 72 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation) is defined in the Law of the Republic of Kalmykia on Government dated November 1, 1998 with addenda and amendments adopted in February, April, and December 2000.

At present the executive power in the republic is represented not only by the government, ministries, state committees, authorities, and departments, but also by the presidential vertical structure in the territory of Kalmykia. The expanded structure of the system of republican executive authorities is represented by the administration of the Kalmyk President, which actually comprises representatives of the President of the Republic of Kalmykia in the cities of Elista and City Chess, in 13 districts of the republics with their own staff. In addition, the system of executive authorities comprises the institute of republican representatives in federal executive authorities. These include the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kalmykia to Moscow under the President of the Russian Federation, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kalmykia to Moscow under the government of the Russian Federation, the Permanent Mission of the Re-

public of Kalmykia to the Southern Federal *okrug* under the Plenipotentiary of the President of the Russian Federation.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the republic is represented in the Parliament of the Russian Federation—both chambers of the Federal Assembly being a representative and legislative authority of the Russian Federation. In 1993 B.V. Khulkhachiyev, who used to be the chairman of the Elista City People's Court, was elected as a member of the State *Duma*, and K.N. Ilyumzhinov and A.V. Golovатов, who used to be the chairman of the republican State Committee for Control over the Public Property, were elected as members of the Council of the Federation.

In the course of the regular election of a Kalmyk delegate for the State *Duma* in 1995, electors gave preference to G.V. Kulik. The reasons for electing G.V. Kulik, a resident of Moscow and a former large-scale federal official, as a delegate from the Republic of Kalmykia for the State *Duma* of the second convocation (or sixth convocation) were simple (of course, the administrative factor also played a certain role). When electing a delegate out of available candidates, electors in the republic acted mostly in accordance with the principle "There is no prophet in your own motherland" and were guided by the habitual hope for the imperative nature of the delegate's mandate (though the free mandate system was already in effect) as they knew about his contacts in Moscow. In 1999 A.M. Buratayeva, who was an announcer in a program of the Central TV station, was elected as a Kalmyk delegate for the State *Duma* of the third convocation.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Part 2, Article 95) and Federal Law *On the procedure for the formation of the Council of the Federation for the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation* dated December 5, 1995, such chief executives as President of the Republic of Kalmykia K.N. Ilyumzhinov and Chairman of the People's *Khural* (Parliament) of the Republic of Kalmykia K.N. Maksimov were elected for the Council of the Federation to represent Kalmykia.

In virtue of Article 77 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kalmykia, a constituent member of the Russian Federation, establishes a system of its state authorities on its own but in compliance with the principles of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and the general principles of the formation of representative and executive state authorities in the constituent members of the Russian Federation, as specified in the Federal Law of October 6, 1999. An intermediate legislative (representative) state authority comprising 25 members was formed in

Kalmykia based on the principle of separation of state powers in April 1993.

After the Steppe Code (Constitution) was adopted and the appropriate legal base was developed, a permanent legislative authority—People's *Khural* (Parliament) of the Republic of Kalmykia—was formed in Kalmykia on an alternative basis by the general equal election with direct ballot voting in October 1994. It comprises 27 delegates elected from territorial election districts for a five-year term (at first the term of delegates' powers was four years).

All members of the People's *Khural* (Parliament) of the Republic of Kalmykia (except for the chairman and his deputy) combine their parliamentary duties with their full-time job, that is, the parliamentary work is not related to any professional work. The combination of a full-time job and work as a delegate has both strong and weak sides.

A positive factor is the saving of budget funds, as delegates receive no salaries; no transport expenses are stipulated or reimbursed, etc. Yet the weak sides prevail over financial benefits. In view of the fact that delegates of the Kalmyk Parliament work only during the period of sessions of commissions convened on the eve of sessions and directly during the period of parliamentary sessions, the major part of draft legislation is prepared by the Parliament's machinery. Due to this, delegates actually take no part in the active lawmaking process and participate in it only at the final stage. This practice of the delegates' work in the legislative authority does not enable delegates to acquire any sufficient experience in legislation. Moreover, the quality of republican legislation depends not so much on delegates as on professionalism and competence of lawyers from the Parliament's machinery, who are not quite free from the effect of external factors. Under conditions of this lawmaking practice, the legislative authority machinery affects the delegates' lawmaking activities. That is why permanent commissions (committees) must be headed by delegates working on a professional basis.

One of the three major branches of state power specified in Chapter 1 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation is judicial power. It is regulated in Chapter VII of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, in the Federal Constitutional Law *On the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation* dated July 21, 1994, the Federal Constitutional Law *On arbitration courts in the Russian Federation* dated April 28, 1995, the Federal Constitutional Law *On the judicial system in the Russian Federation* dated December 31, 1996, the Federal Constitutional Law *On introducing amendments and addenda to the Law of the Russian Federation on the*

Status of Lawyers in the Russian Federation dated December 15, 2001, and other federal laws. The Russian judicial system comprises federal courts and courts of constituent members of the Russian Federation.

Federal courts of general jurisdiction operating in the territory of Kalmykia include the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kalmykia, the Elista City Court, and district courts. A directly superior judicial instance with regard to the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kalmykia is the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation, and a superior judicial instance with regard to the city and district courts of the republic is the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kalmykia.

Courts of the constituent members of the Russian Federation include constitutional (statutory) courts of constituent members of the Russian Federation and justices of the peace that are judges of general jurisdiction in the constituent members of the Russian Federation. Based on the Law of the Republic of Kalmykia *On justices of the peace in the Republic of Kalmykia* dated October 27, 1999, which was adopted in compliance with the Federal Law *On justices of the peace in the Russian Federation* dated December 17, 1988, the positions of justices of the peace were introduced and 14 court districts were formed. In addition to salary and welfare payments provided for judges by federal laws, the activities of republican justices of the peace are also financed with the use of the republican budget funds via the Court Department Administration under the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia.

In accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kalmykia *On justices of the peace in the Republic of Kalmykia* (Article 7), justices of the peace in the republic are appointed by the People's *Khural* (Parliament) of the Republic of Kalmykia as advised by the President of the Republic of Kalmykia and agreed upon with the chairman of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Kalmykia and based on a positive conclusion of the qualifying board of judges in the Republic of Kalmykia. The justice of the peace in the republic is first appointed for a three-year term and in case of re-appointment or subsequent appointments—for a five-year term.

Federal arbitration courts, which have been operating in the territory of Kalmykia since 1995, include the Arbitration Court of the Republic of Kalmykia. A superior judicial instance with regard to the Arbitration Court of the Republic of Kalmykia is the Federal Arbitration Court of the North-Caucasian *Okrug* (with the center in Krasnodar).

The possibility for full-scale and independent effectuation of justice in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal legislation is directly related to the procedure of financing for courts (fi-

nancing is provided from the federal budget only and as a separate item) and procedure for appointing judges for courts of general jurisdiction and arbitration courts. The legal status of judges, their rights and obligations, as well as procedure of their appointment and dismissal are regulated by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Law of the Russian Federation *On the status of judges in the Russian Federation* dated June 26, 1992 (incorporating amendments and addenda), the Federal Constitutional Law *On the judicial system in the Russian Federation*, the Federal Constitutional Law *On introducing addenda and amendments to the Federal Constitutional Law "On the Judicial System in the Russian Federation"* dated December 15, 2001, the Federal Law *On introducing addenda and amendments to the Law of the Russian Federation "On the Status of Judges in the Russian Federation"* dated December 15, 2001.

Judges including chairmen and deputy chairmen of the Supreme Court and Arbitration Court of the Republic of Kalmykia as well as judges including chairmen and deputy chairmen of the city and district courts of the republic are appointed by the President of the Russian Federation as advised by the Chairman of the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation based on a conclusion of the qualifying board of the Supreme Court and qualifying board of the Arbitration Court of the Republic of Kalmykia, respectively. While the former federal legislation required the "agreement" of the legislative (representative) body in the appropriate constituent member of the Russian Federation when appointing judges including chairmen and deputy chairmen of these courts, the Federal Constitutional Law *On introducing addenda and amendments to the Law of the Russian Federation "On the Status of Judges in the Russian Federation"* now stipulates no consultations with the legislative (representative) body of the appropriate constituent member of the Russian Federation when appointing judges including chairmen and deputy chairmen of these courts, that is, this provision has been omitted.

Chairmen and deputy chairmen of the Supreme Court, the Arbitration Court, the Elista City Court, and district courts are appointed by the President of the Russian Federation for a six-year term. One person can be appointed as the chairman (deputy chairman) of the same court many times but not two times in succession. Judges of the Supreme Court, the Arbitration Court, the Elista City Court, and district courts of the republic are first appointed for a three-year term, and then they can be appointed for the same position without any restriction of the term of their powers until they reach the maximum age stipulated for the judge to be in office—65 years.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation defines the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation as a sole federal court and does not provide any federal system of constitutional justice bodies. Thus, the Constitution of the Russian Federation does not name the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation as “supreme” as opposed to the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation and Supreme Arbitration Court of the Russian Federation. Nevertheless, the Federal Constitutional Law *On the judicial system in the Russian Federation* and the Federal Constitutional Law *On introducing addenda and amendments to the Law of the Russian Federation “On the Status of Judges in the Russian Federation”* stipulate the possibility for establishing a constitutional control authority in constituent members of the Russian Federation, that is, they provide constituent members of the Russian Federation with a right but not with a duty. Such constitutional control authorities already exist in certain constituent members of the Russian Federation—Bashkortostan, Buryatia, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karelia, Komi, North Ossetia (Alania), Tatarstan, Tyva, Adygea, Marii El, Sakha (Yakutia), Voronezh, Sverdlovsk, Tyumen, and other regions. Constitutional (statutory) courts of constituent members of the Russian Federation are established in compliance with their constitutions (statutes) and legislation.

The Republic of Kalmykia has no constitutional justice body. However, at this stage there is a need in such a body in constituent members of the Russian Federation (*sic*). As an important problem of federalism consolidation has been solved (a common constitutional space has been established), the next stage is coming in the formation of a law-governed state. The need to provide the compliance of laws in constituent members of the Russian Federation, normative legal acts of state authorities in constituent members of the Russian Federation and local self-government bodies with the constitutions (statutes) of constituent members of the Russian Federation, as well as to interpret the constitutions (statutes) of constituent members of the Russian Federation, to solve problems related to complaints about violations of constitutional rights and freedoms, etc. is of special value in constituent members of the Russian Federation now.

On the whole, constitutional (statutory) courts of constituent members of the Russian Federation have certain prospects of development. Yet a framework federal law about constitutional (statutory) courts of constituent members of the Russian Federation must be adopted to bring them into a common federal judicial system of the country and make their activities more efficient.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Article 129) and Federal Law *On the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation* (in

the edition of November 17, 1995 and incorporating addenda and amendments), the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation is a common federal centralized system of bodies supervising over the observance of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and execution of laws effective in the territory of the Russian Federation on behalf of the Russian Federation. It must ensure the rule of law, unity, and consolidation of justice, protection of human and civil rights and freedoms, as well as interests of the society and state protected by the law.

The system of the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation comprises prosecutor's offices of constituent members of the Russian Federation including that of the Republic of Kalmykia. The public prosecutor of the Republic of Kalmykia is appointed for a five-year term by the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation as agreed upon with the chief state executive authority of the republic—President of the Republic of Kalmykia. The public prosecutor of the republic is subordinate and accountable to the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation and can be dismissed by him. Public prosecutors of Elista and republican districts are appointed for a five-term period and dismissed by the Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation. They are subordinate and accountable to the public prosecutor of the republic and Prosecutor General of the Russian Federation.

The Prosecutor's Office in the republic supervises over the execution of laws and observation of human and civil rights and freedoms by the People's *Khural* (Parliament), President and government of the Republic of Kalmykia, republican ministries and departments, local self-government bodies, federal departments and services located in the territory of the republic, control authorities and their officials, and supervises over the conformity of legal acts they issue. The Prosecutor's Office also supervises over managerial bodies and directors of commercial and non-commercial organizations, as well as bodies and institutions in charge of penalty and taking enforcement measures based on the court verdicts, administrations of confinement and detention faculties, and bodies in charge of operational search actions, inquest, and preliminary investigation.

Public prosecutors of the republic, cities, and districts are in charge of criminal prosecution in accordance with powers delegated based on the procedural criminal legislation of the Russian Federation and coordination of actions of republican law enforcement bodies fighting against crime.

According to the procedural legislation of the Russian Federation, public prosecutors of the republic participate in the legal proceedings and appeal against the decisions, verdicts, definitions and decrees of courts that

are contrary to the law. Besides, the Prosecutor's Office in the republic participates in the law-making process (in the preliminary discussion of draft laws at sessions of commission, working groups, in giving conclusions about draft laws, in discussions at sessions of the parliament, etc.).

Bodies of the republican Prosecutor's Office exercise their authorities independently of federal departments and services, state authorities, local self-government bodies of the republic, social associations and in strict compliance with the laws in force in the territory of the Russian Federation. The Federal Law *On the Prosecutor's Office of the Russian Federation* bans any interference with the prosecutor's work.

Just like other constituent members of the Russian Federation, the Republic of Kalmykia has state authorities not belonging to any of the three power branches. At the same time, these authorities are formed and operate in compliance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation, federal laws, Steppe Code (Constitution), and laws of the republic. According to the well-known lawyer and researcher M.V. Baglay, they are independent state authorities with a special status.¹⁹ Such authorities in the Russian Federation are: Central Election Committee of the Russian Federation, election committees of constituent members of the Russian Federation, district election committees, territorial election committees, and precinct election committees.

The Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia established by the People's *Khural* (Parliament) and President of the Republic of Kalmykia in accordance with Article 23 of the Federal Law *On basic guarantees of the electoral rights and the right to participate in the referendum for citizens of the Russian Federation* dated September 19, 1997 and Law of the Republic of Kalmykia *On the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia* dated July 31, 1998²⁰ is a state republican body. It is formed in an open and public way for a five-year term based on proposals set forth by electoral associations, electoral blocks, public associations, and elective local self-government bodies and previous Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia comprising 14 members with the right for the decisive vote. Public employees make up not more than one third in the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia.

Members of the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia elect the chairman, deputy chairman, and secretary by ballot voting at their first session. The Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia is a legal entity operating on a permanent basis.

When holding elections or referendums of the federal level, the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia acts under the guidance of

the Central Election Committee of the Russian Federation. In its turn, when holding elections or referendums of the federal and republican levels, the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia acts as a superior committee with regard to election committees and referendum commissions formed in the territory of the republic. When holding referendums of the Russian Federation or referendums of the republic, the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia acts as a referendum commission.

The Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia provides the execution and protection of electoral rights and right to participate in the referendum for citizens of the Russian Federation permanently or predominantly residing in the territory of Kalmykia and having electoral rights within the scope of its competence and in the territory of the republic. It participates actively in all stages of the election process and in federal and republican referendums. In cases stipulated by federal and republican laws, the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia is entitled to convene and hold the election for Kalmyk state authorities.

The Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia exercises control over the observance of justice in the preparation and holding of elections of all levels and ensures the conformity of the use of appropriate laws in the territory of the republic. As to the issues related to the preparation and holding of elections or referendums, the Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia is entitled to hear information from executive authorities and local self-government bodies of the republic, take decisions binding upon not only executive authorities, state institutions and local self-government bodies of the republic but also candidates, registered candidates, electoral associations, electoral blocks, public associations, organizations, officials, and electors.

The Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia is entitled to set forth a proposal to conduct an appropriate inspection and suppress the violations of federal constitutional laws, federal and republican laws and statutes of municipal institutions for regulating the preparation, and holding of elections and referendums to the law-enforcement bodies, which are to take adequate measures immediately within the legally fixed term. State authorities, local self-government bodies, institutions, organizations, state-owned enterprises, as well as their officials must render assistance to election committees for them to exercise their powers in the territory of the republic. The Election Committee of the Republic of Kalmykia is independent of any state authorities or local self-government bodies of the republic within the scope of its competence.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Part 1, Article 17) and Steppe Code of the Republic of Kalmykia (Article 2), the Republic of Kalmykia recognizes and guarantees human and civil rights and freedoms in compliance with the generally recognized principles and provisions of the international law. To provide guarantees for the state protection of human and civil rights and freedoms, their observance and respect for them on the part of state authorities, local self-government bodies and officials in the republic, the institute of non-judicial state protection of civil rights was established in 1997. In 1997 the republic formed the Human Rights Commission under the President of the Republic of Kalmykia, and in 2001 (in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Kalmykia *On the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Republic of Kalmykia*) the republic established an independent institute of the Commissioner for Human Rights (ombudsman) whose rights, goals, competence, and powers are defined according to the Federal Constitutional Law *On the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation* dated February 26, 1997.

Taking into account the world practice of the institute of non-judicial state protection of civil rights, this Federal Constitutional Law defined the institute of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation as an independent state authority, that is, neither legislative, nor executive, or judicial state authority. However, it is independent and is not accountable to any state authorities, local self-government bodies or officials.

The major goal of the Commissioner is to contribute to the restoration of infringed human and civil rights and freedoms, legal education for the general public, improvement of the republican human rights legislation, and to bring this legislation in conformity with the international standards as well as develop international cooperation in the field of human rights. The Commissioner is to examine complaints and applications from citizens of the Russian Federation regarding decisions or actions (failures to act) of state authorities, local self-government bodies, officials or public employees if the applicant has already appealed against these decisions or actions (failures to act) according to the judicial or administrative procedure, but does not agree with the decisions taken with regard to his/her complaint.

When examining the complaint or application, the Commissioner has the right of free access to any state authorities, local self-government bodies, enterprises, institutions, or organizations regardless of their forms of incorporation or ownership, military units, or social associations located in the territory of the republic, as well as to demand and receive any nec-

essary information, documents, materials, or explanations from them. Based on the results of the complaint or application examination, the Commissioner may take a decision and send it to the aforesaid authorities, individuals, organizations, or enterprises in whose actions he discovers any infringement on human rights. In cases of need, he may apply to the appropriate bodies with a petition for the initiation of disciplinary or administrative proceedings or prosecution with regard to the official whose decisions or actions (failures to act) infringe upon human and civil rights and freedoms.

After receiving the Commissioner's decision based on the results of the complaint or application examination, state authorities, local self-government bodies, and officials must examine it and provide their reply within a one-month term.

According to the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Part 1, Article 78), federal executive authorities may establish their territorial bodies to exercise federal powers in constituent members of the Russian Federation and appoint appropriate officials. These territorial federal executive authorities in Kalmykia are the Department of the Federal State Employment Service in the Republic of Kalmykia, Administration of the Federal Security Service of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia, Administration of the Tax Police Ministry of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia, Administration of the Ministry of Justice of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia, Administration of the Ministry for Taxes and Duties of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia, Department of the Pension Fund of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia, Administration of the Federal Board of Treasury in the Republic of Kalmykia, Administration of the Judicial Department under the Supreme Court of the Russian Federation in the Republic of Kalmykia, etc. They are absolutely independent of any executive authorities of the Republic of Kalmykia, yet they are to take into account the republic's interests in their activities, so they interact with republican executive authorities on an active basis.

In addition, the National Bank of the Republic of Kalmykia, a branch of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation, operates in the territory of Kalmykia. The National Bank of the Republic of Kalmykia performs some functions of the Central Bank of the Russian Federation in the territory of Kalmykia. The major goal of the National Bank of the Republic of Kalmykia is to pursue an integrated federal policy in the sphere of money circulation, credit control, use of credit resources, and supervision over the banking operations. The National Bank of the Republic of Kalmykia com-

prises a cash settlement center, its major goal being efficient, safe, and failure-free operation of the payment system in the Russian Federation.

One of special institutes of people's sovereignty in the republic is local self-government ensuring the democratic decentralization of power. Local self-government in the republic is in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws, Steppe Code (Constitution) of the Republic of Kalmykia and laws, statutes of municipal institutions of the republic. When developing constitutional provisions, the Federal Law *On general principles of the organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation* dated August 28, 1995 defines local self-government as "independent public activities that are citizens' own responsibility, recognized and guaranteed by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, and address issues of local significance either directly or via local self-government bodies based on the public interests, the people's historic and other local traditions."²¹

The Republic of Kalmykia has formed a sufficient legal base defining the status of local self-government and regimen of its operation. The available set of normative and legal acts and republican acts regulates issues of the system and organization of local self-government, financial, and economic basis of local self-government as well as competence of local self-government bodies. Normative acts forming the legal base of local self-government include statutes of republican municipal institutions.

In February 2001, there was a regular election of delegates for representative local self-government bodies in the republic's 128 municipal institutions: 3 at the city level, 13 in districts, and 112 in villages. As many as 734 delegates were elected to representative local self-government bodies of the republic (5–9 on average for each municipal institution, except for the Elista one where 11 delegates were elected). Heads of 121 municipal institutions were elected out of delegates of representative local self-government bodies, and in seven municipal institutions they were elected directly by the population by general equal elections with direct ballot voting. Heads of municipal institutions are elected for a four-year term and work full-time, while chairmen and members of representative bodies combine their powers with the primary production or official activities.

The Federal Law *On general principles of the organization of local self-government in the Russian Federation* defines issues falling within the exclusive competence of representative local self-government bodies. They are the only bodies entitled to adopt the generally binding regula-

tions for issues of municipal body formation, to approve of the local budget and report on its execution, and to establish local taxes and duties. In addition, representative bodies define major directions of the development in different spheres and branches of municipal activities, as well as establish the procedure for municipal property control and management. Representative bodies, which are not restricted by the principle of separation of powers, control the activities of other local self-government bodies and officials according to the statutes of municipal institutions. However, this list of powers of representative local self-government bodies is not complete. It can be expanded in statutes of municipal institutions as well as by delegating special state powers to local self-government bodies in accordance with the republican legislation.

The head of the municipal institution and machinery (administration) having their own competence, implementing decisions of representative bodies, and being in charge of the everyday administration of affairs in the territory of their jurisdiction form a part of the system of local self-government bodies. The municipal institution in Elista is chaired by the mayor elected from among 11 delegates for the Elista City Meeting of Delegates, and other municipal institutions (according to their statutes) are headed by the director, chairman, *akhlach*,ⁱ etc.

The establishment of new local self-government bodies is just the onset of the reform. The main thing is to become familiar with new functions and new role in the public power system, to start producing a real effect on local affairs, to exercise human and civil rights and freedoms, and to establish an efficient and democratic local self-government system.

These are particular features typical for the development of Kalmykia, its statehood, and state institutes under the conditions of the formation of Russian federalism and federative relations. The federative reformation of Russia clears the way for new technologies of power organization, control of peoples and territories, their mutual relations, and interaction in a common legal and historic space, for the development of self-government and mutual liability traditions.

ⁱ Translator's note: *akhlach*—an elder.

Notes

- 1 *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union in resolutions and decisions adopted by congresses, conferences and plenums of its Central Committee*. Vol. 15: 1985–1988. Moscow, 1989. 624–644.
- 2 Ibid.
- 3 *Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR*. Moscow, 1988. No. 49 (2487). 727, 729, 813–857.
- 4 *Sovetskaya Kalmykia*. 1989. January 28, March 28.
- 5 *Bulletin of the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR*. Moscow, 1989. No. 44 (1618). 1303.
- 6 For more details about the clauses of the law, electoral right, electoral process, and results of the elections see: K.N. Maksimov. *History of the Kalmyk national statehood*. Moscow, 2000. 254–259.
- 7 *Collected legislative and regulatory acts about repressions and rehabilitation of victims of political repressions*. Moscow, 1993. 189–190.
- 8 *It was like this: national repressions in the USSR, 1919–1952. Repressed nations today: in three volumes*. Moscow, 1993. Vol. 3. 263–265.
- 9 *Kalmykia: ethnic and political panorama: essays, documents and materials*. Moscow, 1995. Vol. 1. 89, 90.
- 10 *Kalmykia in figures: Collected statistics*. Elista, 2000. 154–155; *Russian yearbook on statistics: Collected statistics*. Moscow, 1995. 369; *Information on the social and economic position of Russia*. 1999. Moscow, 1999. 29.
- 11 *Kalmykia in figures*. 148–151.
- 12 Ibid. 153, 155; *Social and economic position of the Republic of Kalmykia: January–December 2000*. Elista, 2001. 22–26.
- 13 *Kalmykia in figures*. 153, 156; *Social and economic position of Russia: 1998*. Moscow, 1998. 373.
- 14 *Social and economic position of Russia*. Moscow, 1999. 217–218; *Social and economic position of the Republic of Kalmykia*. 6.
- 15 *Social and economic position of Russia*. Moscow, 1999. 58; *Social and economic position of the Republic of Kalmykia*. 64; *Kalmykia in figures*. 213.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 *Kalmykia in figures*. 29, 167; *Social and economic position of the Republic of Kalmykia*. 95, 118.
- 18 *Social and economic position of the Republic of Kalmykia: January–December 1994*. Elista, 1995. 38; *Social and economic position of the Republic of Kalmykia*. 71.
- 19 M.V. Baglay. *Constitutional right of the Russian Federation. Textbook for higher education institutions*. Moscow, 1998. 337.
- 20 Federal Law *On the key guarantees of electoral rights and rights of citizens of the Russian Federation to take part in referendums* (incorporating amendments and addenda). Central Electoral Committee of the Russian Federation. Moscow, 1999; *Bulletin of the People's Khural (Parliament) of the Republic of Kalmykia*. Elista, 1998. No. 5. 155–181.
- 21 *Collected legislative and other legal acts on the issues related to elections to federal state authorities and referendums of the Russian Federation*. Moscow, 1997. 169.

Conclusion

A group of Oirats (Kalmyks), which moved to the north-west toward Russia from the Dzungaria whose territorial unity had disrupted, eventually constituted the backbone population group in a newly developing form of the Kalmyk statehood that was typical of the feudal division period. This is why the Kalmyk Khanate can be considered a typical example of an Oirat khanate of the feudal division period. By the middle of the 17th century, the formation of the Kalmyk ethno-political entity in the form of a feudal khanate was over in the Volga region. The nearly simultaneous formation of other Oirat khanates in various regions of Eurasia (the Dzungar Khanate, the Khoshout Khanate) can hardly be regarded as accidental. Most likely, objective factors related to the Oirats' ethnogeny played a role in this development.

Retrospective study of Kalmykia's statehood and legal status and of the evolution of its individual institutions—state authorities, judicial system, social framework, relations with Russia's central and local authorities during centuries—shows that Kalmyks eventually obtained their ethno-territorial autonomy in the Russian territory. Apart from the influence of internal objective factors, Kalmykia's development was conditioned by active influence of both general patterns and individual manifestations of the evolution of Russia's state, social, and judicial systems.

Until the middle of the 17th century, Russia was trying to build its relations with Kalmyks, taking into account both domestic and external interests of both sides and on the basis of bilateral voluntary agreements of the lord-vassal nature. Kalmyks, in their turn, were striving to establish relations of political immunity, which would not rule out the lord-vassal principles, and yet both sides would act as sovereign agents.

Having legally formalized and confirmed the state allegiance at the beginning of the second half of the 17th century, Kalmyks voluntarily joined the Russian state, which, in its turn, recognized the Kalmyk

Khanate as an ethno-political entity. The relations between Kalmykia and Russia acquired the state-power nature, although the functions of the state authorities at this stage were united merely by the common goal to insure security. The Kalmyk Khanate had a factual status of politically autonomous entity, its union with Russia remaining a military-political one up until a certain point. In the 1720s, the Kalmyk Khanate's status of an administratively autonomous unit was finalized.

With absolutism and further state power centralization gaining momentum in Russia, the Kalmyk Khanate was gradually incorporated into Russia's common system of territorial administration, with the local bodies of state control unified and corresponding legal statuses of social estates established.

Under the threat of disintegration of their ethno-political unity and total liquidation of their administrative autonomy, a large part of Kalmyks left Russia in the second half of the 18th century, thus jeopardizing their own and the remaining Kalmyk population's (in Russian) chances to survive as an ethnic group. Both the Kalmyk and Russian sides had failed to show timely political wisdom and take measures as the crisis in their relations was brewing. It would have been advisable for both sides to show the will to take a timely notice of what was boiling up, to analyze the situation calmly and find a civilized solution on the state level in order to satisfy mutual interests. The way the tsarist administration acted, however, was trying to establish a behindhand "constitutional order."

I would like to make a comment in this respect. Those scholars-politicians that raise a question about the liquidation and "taking apart" the elements of ethnic federalism should first go for a thorough examination of the history of the peoples of our country, the history of Russia, the history that contained most valuable experience of joint life and common struggle for the preservation of the unity and security of Russia. This is not the right way to refer to the building of the states in Nigeria in order to "dissolve the tribes in different states so that none would dominate in any individual state."¹ It is very important to remember that many ethno-political entities originated in the motherly bosom of Russia. Russia has historically been formed as a federal unity of its multi-ethnic people. Today, Russia is playing a uniting role, taking care of its multi-ethnic people, all citizens of the Russian Federation.

Due to new circumstances and Russia's flexible policy, the part of Kalmyks that remained within the unitary Russian state survived as an ethnic group, which eventually formed its own ethno-territorial unit with its own system of state authorities. However, this system was gradually

integrated into Russia's common system of state control. The Russian Empire conducting its great-power policies, Kalmykia eventually lost its administratively autonomous status and was incorporated into the *guberniya* as its special constituent. Because of organizational reasons, the Provisional Government failed to grant the status of ethno-territorial autonomous entity to Kalmykia either.

Having created a formally federative state, the Soviet authorities granted a symbolic unified statehood to many peoples, unified the social system and state structures, authorities, politics, virtually obscuring the ethnic cultures and traditional of the peoples. As a result, the national problems that the Soviet authorities had resolved "totally and ultimately" were in actuality merely internalized, eventually surfacing in the 1980s–1990s in radical way requiring urgent measures.

Under today's conditions, the choice of the federal model for the Russian state appears to be justified from the historic perspective and with a view to the optimal future development, since this model represents the best constitutionally established system of state building, which can ensure the integrity of the country, efficient control of political and economic processes, and protection of the rights and liberties of each individual citizen.

The Constitution of the Russian Federation provides for all necessary conditions for the implementation of the principles of federal state system, and for the formation of the legal basis for securing this system. The following laws are important pillars in the building of the new Russian Federalism: the Federal Law *On principles and procedure of delimitation of the competence and powers between state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of constituent members of the Russian Federation* (June 24, 1999), the Federal Law *On general principles of organizing legislative (representative) and executive state authorities of the constituent members of the Russian Federation* (October 6, 1999, with amendments and supplements of 29 July 2000), the Federal Constitutional Law *On the procedure of the incorporation into the Russian Federation and the formation of a new constituent member within the Russian Federation* (December 17, 2001), and others. Besides, the changes in the procedure of formation of the Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the establishment of the State Council of the Russian Federation, the institution of plenipotentiaries of the President of the Russian Federation in seven constituent members of the Federation, and other measures also contribute to strengthening the Russian federalism.

For further development of the Russian federalism, however, the state has to develop a concept for development of federal relations in Russia, a legal basis for regulating the system of federal relations, for securing an economic platform, and for the development of local self-government.

The legal basis of federalism that is being formed inspires optimism and confidence in the prospects of the Russian federalism, despite various opinions and stances concerning the legitimacy of the existing national-state units up to the denial of their legitimate status altogether. The Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal legislation stipulate that all types of constituent members are united into the federation based on the same constitutional principles: the unified state sovereignty of the Russian Federation; supremacy of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and federal laws on the entire territory of the federation; state and territorial integrity of the federation; the unified system of state control; delimitation of powers and competences between state authorities of the Russian Federation and state authorities of its constituent members; Russia's peoples' equality and the right self-determination, etc. The constituent members of the Russian Federation are equal in their status and in their relations with the federal state authorities. Russia is becoming a genuine federation, all its peoples being its inherent, equal, constituting parts. Fully sharing an opinion expressed by V. Zorin, former chairman of the Committee for the Affairs of Nationalities of the State *Duma* of the sixth convocation, we can state that the understanding of this historical fact, confirmed in this research, must become the consolidating idea that will promote and reinforce our federal state.²

Notes

1 V. Ye Chirkin, "To shut down America?" in *State and Law*. 1997. No. 2. 124.

2 *Russia's National Policy: History and Contemporaneity*. Moscow, 1997. 589.

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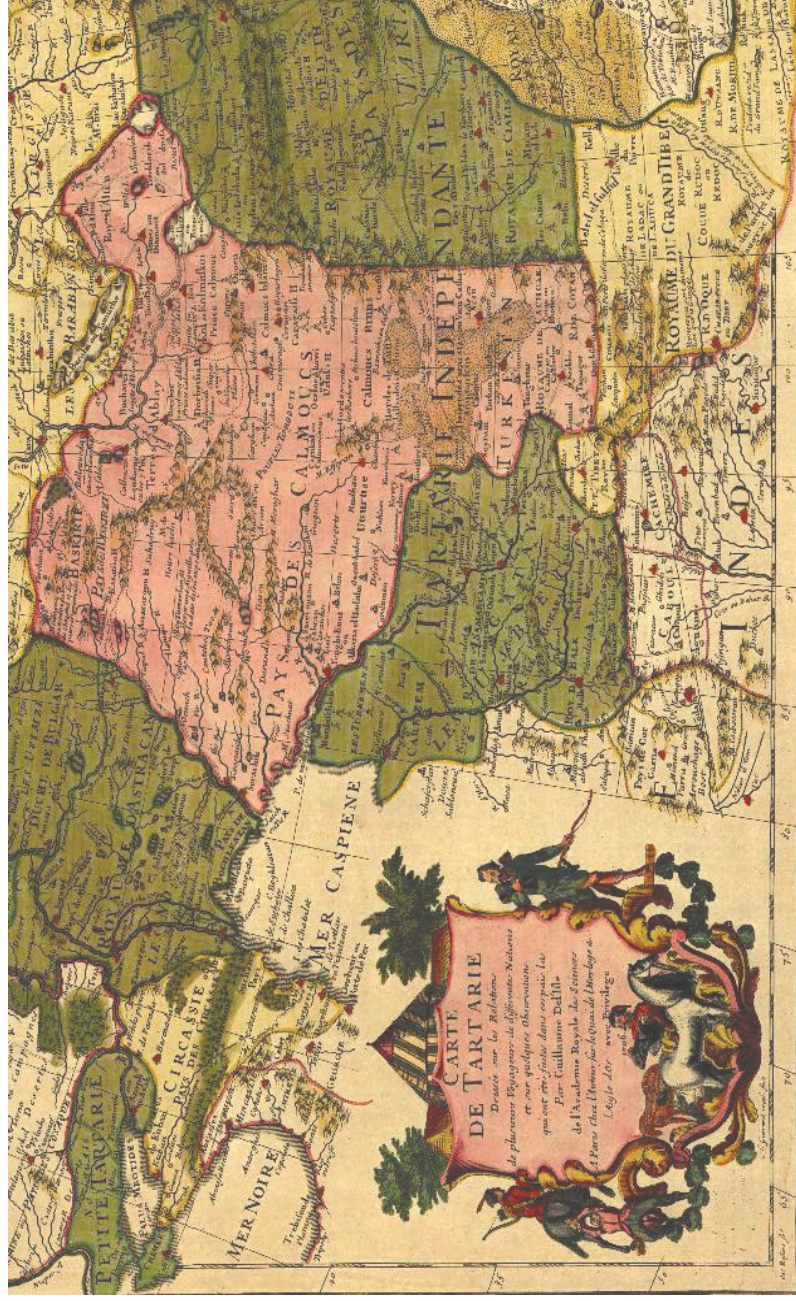
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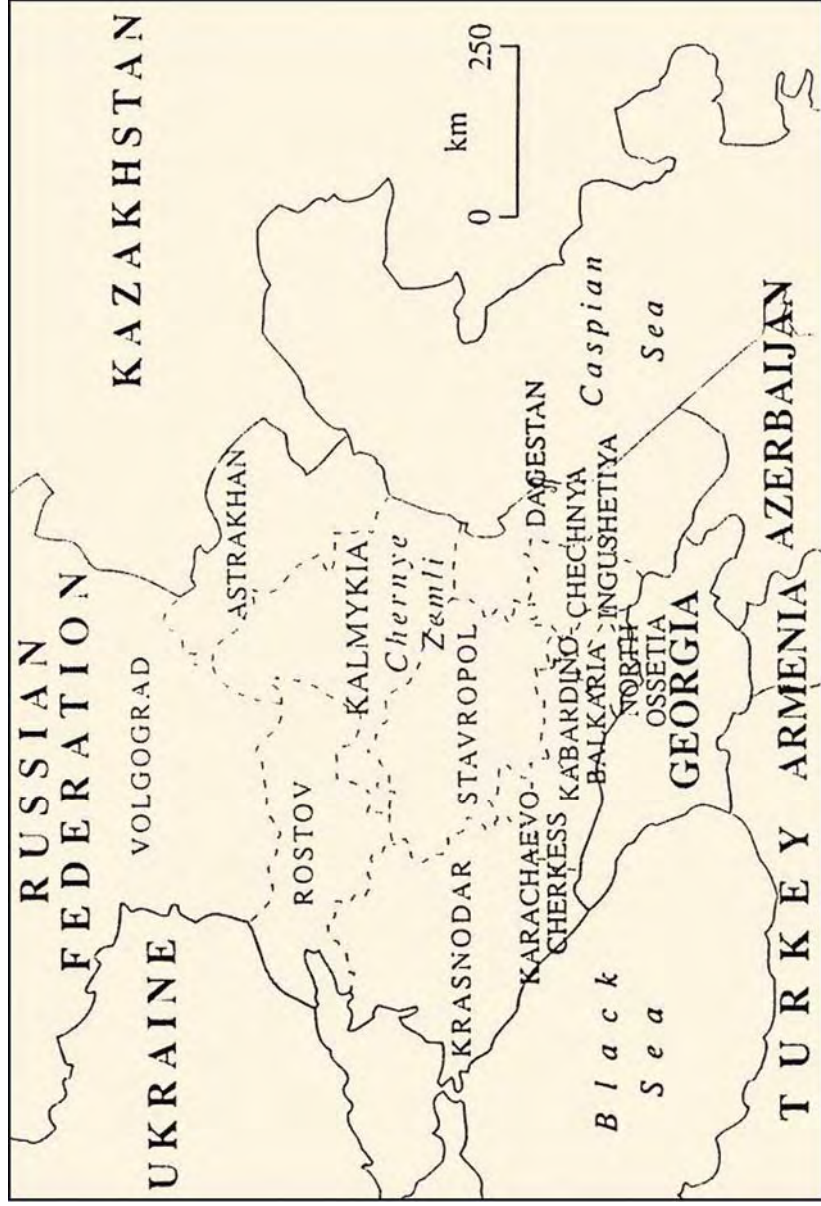
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Map fragment showing the territories of the Kalmyks as in 1706. Map Collection of the Library of Congress: "Carte de Tartarie" of Guillaume de L'Isle (1675–1726)



Kalmykia and its neighbors today



Peter the Great and Ayuka Khan



Rear Admiral Denis S. Kalmykov (1687–1745), captain of Russian Imperial warships under Peter the Great, and commander of the harbors of Astrakhan and Kronstadt



The Kalmyk delegation at the St. Petersburg celebration
of the 300 year anniversary of Kalmyk accession to the Russian Empire, 1909
Seated left, I.N. Sokolevsky, Governor of Astrakhan, and
right, D. Tundutov, cornet of the Grodno Hussar Regiment

Colonel of the Russian Imperial Army,
B.S. Magnatov (1869-1919)



Monument of 2nd Cavalry
commander
I. O. Gorodovikov,
Hero of the Soviet Union



Lieutenant-general B. B. Gorodovikov, Hero of the Soviet Union, was head of the government of the Kalmyk Republic



Early 17th century Buddhist monk, Zaya Pandita, who composed a new alphabet to transcribe the Oirat language as pronounced, which is called Todo Bichig or “Clear script”



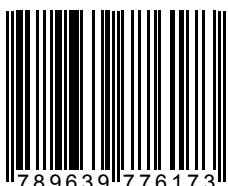
As taught at school

A meticulously detailed history of relations between the Russian state and the Kalmyk people from the 17th century until our days, this book focuses on the Kalmyks' official accession to the Russian state; the gradual curtailment of the autonomy of the Kalmyk khanate and inclusion of its people in the centralized system of Russian state control; Kalmyk disillusionment as their internal affairs were increasingly encroached upon by the central authorities and the economic burdens imposed on them by their new "patron" kept growing; the tragic story of a part of the people setting off for their ancestral homeland, Dzungaria, in the mid-18th century, with most perishing on the way, never to reach their destination.

Issues arising from relations between the Kalmyk people and Russia before and after this Buddhist nation's accession to the Russian state are examined by Maksimov. Kalmyk history in the Soviet period is analyzed from a political, economic, sociological and cultural perspective. The book describes the changing national policies of the totalitarian state towards Kalmyks, including extreme measures such as the stripping of autonomy and mass deportation of the people to remote areas of the Soviet Union in 1943, as retaliation for alleged cooperation with the Nazis. The issues of the legal status of Kalmykia, and the development of the republic under conditions of the new Russian federal system of state government are also covered.

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